Enes Dedić

THE BOSNIAN KINGDOM AND THE SERBIAN DESPOTATE

(1402–1459)

historical monographs

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Cazin – Sarajevo, 2023

To father Esad and mother Rezija

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PREFACE

The research on the relationship between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate began in 2013 during my doctoral studies at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo. I defended my doctoral dissertation titled "The Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate (1402–1459)" on January 26, 2017, in front of a committee consisting of Prof. Dr. Esad Kurtović (president) and Prof. Dr. Pejo Ćošković (member). Prof. Dr. Dubravko Lovrenović, who unfortunately passed away just days before the defense, also participated as a committee member, having already submitted an evaluation report. The book before us represents a revised and expanded version of the dissertation. While the fundamental hypothetical standpoints remained unchanged, the manuscript was enriched with archival data found during later research, as well as the latest historiographic achievements. Recent observations of historical processes on this topic have also highlighted the need to revise and define certain positions more clearly. Since Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia lack archives with significant medieval sources, the portrayal of the relationship between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate is heavily dependent on the perspective of neighboring sources. Consequently, this study does not exhaust all the possibilities associated with this thematic framework. This book is the result of eight years of research, during which the author has matured scientifically. The modified and expanded text of the dissertation was published by the Institute of History at the University of Sarajevo in the winter of 2021 in the Bosnian language. The book immediately captured the interest of a wider readership, as evidenced by the fact that the first edition sold out within the first month.

The Ministry of Science, Higher Education, and Youth of Sarajevo Canton made a decision at the end of 2022 to allocate funds for the translation of this book into the English language and its publication. I entrusted this task to MA Anela Dedić, a young translator with significant translation projects

in the field of historical science already under her belt. Despite the fact that there has been an increased number of scholarly works on the medieval period in Bosnia and Serbia over the last decade, the medieval history of these countries remains relatively unknown and poorly recognized in the European context, primarily due to the language barrier. I considered it valuable to publish a new edition of this book in the English language, aiming to make the results of my research accessible to a wider circle of historians and interested readers. The policies and ideologies in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period following the publication of the Bosnian edition of the book have placed a special focus on the relationships between Bosnia and Serbia in the Middle Ages. Thus, the publication of the English edition of this book is of great significance. Hopefully, this book will increase the interest of foreign historians in the medieval history of Southeast European countries, as well as encourage domestic historians to publish their works in English. I would like to express my gratitude to the publishers of the book, the Institute of History at the University of Sarajevo, and the P.I. "Center for Culture and Tourism Cazin – Department of the Museum of the Bosnian Kingdom" for the trust they have shown and the recognized potential of this study.

I am grateful for the advice and suggestions provided by the members of the Committee during the preparation of my doctoral dissertation. Special thanks are due to my mentor, Prof. Dr. Esad Kurtović, who guided the process throughout the dissertation writing and subsequent revisions, providing exceptionally valuable and useful suggestions. Also, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Prof. Dr. Vesna Mušeta-Aščerić for reviewing the book and providing valuable guidance that significantly enriched this work.

I am particularly grateful to my colleagues at the Institute for History, who have offered generous support and understanding whenever needed. For the purpose of researching this topic, I stayed at a number of domestic and foreign institutions. The employees of the Dubrovnik State Archives, the library of the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Sarajevo, and the library of the Institute for History at the University of Sarajevo regularly

assisted me, and I extend my warmest thanks to them. In gathering hard-to-access literature and assistance with certain translations, I received significant help from Dejan Zadro, Dženan Dautović, Nedim Rabić, Irfan Teskeredžić, Milomir Maksimović, Milan Vojnović, Elmedina Duranović, and Miloš Ivanović. The work on this book over the past years was financially supported by my extended family from Sanski Most, European countries, and the United States. On this occasion, I would like to thank each and every one of them. Aside from providing financial support, my family provided understanding and moral support during the writing process. A special thanks is due to my wife, Anela, for her support, faith, and understanding throughout all these years. The life partners of all historians inevitably live with their topics. Once again, Anela's artistic work adorns the cover of this book, which reflects her understanding of this topic.

Sarajevo, September 2023

INTRODUCTION

Ground zero: Defining the research position

The history of Southeast Europe up to modern times illustrates how the issue of state relations is an extremely complex problem. A significant burden in the study of mutual relations between the Slavic states of the Middle Ages lies in the false perception of this period in later history. From the period of the awakening of national consciousness, projected through reliance on the Middle Ages, scientific constructions about the medieval past were initiated to suit the circumstances of that time. The modern age conditioned a specific state-legal relationship between the territories previously occupied by the medieval states of the South Slavs, thus creating a specific character of interpretation of the medieval past. Mirroring of the daily political circumstances into a medieval setting reduced the state framework of an epoch to an inaccurate context that made it difficult to form clearer notions of the South Slavic Middle Ages.

The presented model particularly influenced the study of the mutual relations of states established in Southeast Europe. The medieval era, with its unique understanding of neighborliness and interstate relations, considered through the lens of modern state perceptions, received treatment adapted to the conceptions of the South Slavic region with the ideological imprint of its time. The historiography of the modern age, as a silhouette of the past, reflected a contaminated image of the relations between the states of Southeast Europe in the Middle Ages. The state relations of the 15th century, viewed in light of a people's shared past in the 20th century, left historiographic rifts and taboos that are evident in the fact that no monographic study has been published to date concerning the mutual relations of the medieval past of these countries. In such an atmosphere, following the

developmental path of scientific thought of the pioneer scholars of South Slavic medieval studies, the period, loosely defined as modern critical historiography, continued to tread the paths of studying the past because the modern history of Southeastern Europe continued being reshaped ever since. Scientific publications, based on distorted foundations with predetermined research goals, could not contribute to more exact reconstructions of mutual relations between the states of Southeast Europe and in many ways imposed a heavy burden on later attempts to reconstruct this thematic framework.

Indicators of the briefly presented abuse of the specific developmental trajectory of scientific thought in this area are especially applicable to the examples of mutual relations of the medieval state organizations of Bosnia and Serbia. Without the intention of delving deeper into a chronological framework that is not within the scope of this research, there is a need to emphasize that the above-mentioned model of researching history was established in the periods of the very beginnings of political organization in Bosnia in the 10th century and in the last quarter of the 15th century, i.e. during the reign of King Tvrtko I Kotromanić (Ban / King 1353 / 1377-1391), when Bosnia, in the political context of that time, grew into the strongest state in Southeast Europe. According to the historiographical construction of the Serbian character of the Bosnian political element, Bosnia in the 10th century appeared as a geographical determinant within the Serbian state, and from the 12th century, after a kind of division of the Serbian state, as an independent state that grew out of the Serbian state. Due to aforementioned construction, all later forms of medieval Bosnian exclusivity were provided with Serbian political and ethnic prefix.[1] Creating the necessary dynastic legitimacy from his

[1] The presented model of observing the medieval Bosnian state in the period from the 10th to the 12th century is represented through several scientific works. On this occasion, we will list several overviews of the political history of the medieval Serbian state in which the presented principle is recorded: Stanoje Stanojević, *Istorija srpskoga naroda*, Izdavačka knjižarnica Napredak, Beograd 1926, 95. Konstantin Jireček, *Istorija Srba-Prva knjiga do 1537. godine (Politička istorija)*, Slovo Ljubve, Beograd 1978, 68. Vladimir Ćorović, *Istorija Srba*, BIGZ, Beograd 1989, 85. Sima Ćirković, "Srbija između Vizantijskog carstva i Bugarske", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda. Od najstarijih vremena*

distant kinship with the Nemanjić dynasty and using the established practice of the European Middle Ages, Tvrtko fulfilled all the requirements of the medieval bureaucracy for the elevation of his state to the rank of kingdom. This event was the basis on which theses about "Serbs", as the most significant element in Tvrtko's royal title, were constructed. According to these interpretations, the Serbs were the legitimate bearers of the kingdom and the most numerous residents in the state.[2] Once constructed, such theses were passed on in an almost identical form through a wider framework of historiographical works and literature, including school textbooks, for more than a century, and thus left significant traces on all segments concerned with the study and understanding of political relations between Bosnia and Serbia in the Middle Ages. This kind of understanding of the line of development of the state organization in Bosnia has become the interpretation followed by the entire historiographical school.[3] The modern projection of the character of the Bosnian state as a continuation of Serbian statehood in the 15th century produced unsubstantiated grounds on which it was not possible to draft a larger sketch of the mutual state relations of the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate in this historical framework. The nature of the primary sources on the mutual relations between Bosnia and the Despotate in the 15th century is interwoven with elements that do not allow the reconstruction of the aforementioned perspective. It is necessary to observe the medieval circumstances and the context of the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate in their original form, making a clear distinction between the organization of that time and the modern achievements, to which

do Maričke bitke (1371), Prva knjiga, SKZ, Beograd 1981, 162. Miloš Blagojević, *Nemanjići i Lazarevići-Srpska srednjovekovna državnost*, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, Beograd 2004, 277.

[2] At this point, we will list only a few publications. Stanojević, *Istorija srpskog naroda*, 177. Jireček, *Istorija Srba I*, 320. Miloš Blagojević-Dejan Medaković, *Istorija srpske državnosti*, vol. 1: Od nastanka prvih država do početka srpske nacionalne revolucije, SANU, "Beseda" izdavačka ustanova pravoslavne eparhije Bačke-Društvo istoričara južnobačkog i sremskog okruga, Novi Sad 2000, 238-242.

[3] The latest lexicon edition of Serbian historiography, the Lexicon of the Serbian Middle Ages, incorporated medieval Bosnian history into its scope of study. However, all references to the medieval feudal state organization have passed without examples from the history of medieval Bosnia. Compare: *Leksikon srpskog srednjeg veka*, Knowledge, Beograd 1999.

today's researchers are witnesses. Although the writing of a historical episode is essentially a view of history from the perspective of a researcher who is subject to the influence of his time, but the sources, with all their breadth and character, represent the basis, benchmark and guide for a credible projecting of an image of the past. Preserved sources from the 15th century dictate a research position in the study of mutual relations between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate as two separate neighboring state formations, which in the turbulent period of the final phase of the Middle Ages came into direct contact with each other and broader political movements of a regional character. It was the primary archival source material from the titled chronological framework that represented the basic support for the research of this topic.

Mutual relations between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate in the period from 1402 to 1459 were manifested through several segments. The neighboring character of these states conditioned frequent relations that were reflected through political, economic and religious circumstances. The task of this book concerns the reconstruction of the mutual relations of these states, contained through the lens of the direct relations of the most important factors of the two state organizations. The chosen methodology is based on the separate processing of different thematic frameworks for which adequate sources existed. The political relations of Bosnia and the Despotate, as the areas with the most frequent interactions, represent the central segment and occupy the largest part of the book in terms of volume. The specific political, economic and geographical position of Srebrenica as a bone of contention between Bosnian kings and Serbian despots is presented in a separate thematic framework so that the overall historical episode of one of the most striking examples of the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate can be viewed as an uninterrupted whole. The economic character of this region and the geographical position of Bosnia and the Despotate conditioned the belonging of these countries to a single economic circle with the center in Ragusa, which also

determined common points of contact in the sphere of business. A special segment of mutual contact between different religions in the area of Bosnia and the Despotate was observed in symbiosis with political-geographical indicators. However, with the aim of better clarity, that part was placed in a separate chapter. The available knowledge about the geographical relations between Bosnia and the Despotate, which are manifested through frequent changes of the border, is presented in another chapter.

The first half of the 15th century represents a period of turbulent events on European soil, which strongly affected Bosnia and the Despotate. In this period, the influences and ambitions of the Eastern and Western powers strongly clashed over the Balkan states. Therefore, the analysis of the mutual relations of these states must be viewed in symbiosis with major events in the whirlwind of which the last stage of the medieval era ended. The aim of this book is to present the overall chronology of the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate to the extent that the source material allows. Particularly important is the analysis of the problems of mutual conflicts, foreign policy interventions regarding certain events, the relationship of states towards the great powers, the participation of the nobility, the problem of the border, participation in the same economic flow and cultural permeation. In the shadow of major state issues, there is a need to define the role of these relationships in the life of ordinary people, especially in border areas. One of the main challenges of this research consisted in the description of these relations through the lens of the neighboring countries. The analysis of archival material is presented using a descriptive method in combination with the methods of historical topography and comparison. A descriptive methodological approach brings the historical source and its content even closer to the reader. The methodology of earlier historiographical models of studying Bosnia's relations with other countries offered quality starting points that were also applied in this book.

Contemporaries about Bosnia and the Despotate

The most important aspects of the relationship between the two states concerns the direct mutual correspondence between the rulers and nobles. The specific fate of the territories encompassing Bosnia and the Despotate in later eras conditioned the preservation of an extremely small number of diplomatic documents originating from this area. The collection of documents available today from the rulers of Bosnia and the Despotate contains only one document that directly dealt with their mutual relations.[4] The statistics clearly illustrate the problems and potential limitations faced by researchers who are required to reconstruct these relationships by examining the archival material of their neighbors. Among the most significant contemporaries, the Republic of Ragusa with a branched network of businesses in Southeastern Europe should definitely be highlighted. Extensive material on the political and economic activities of the Ragusans from this period is contained in the present-day Dubrovnik State Archives. The files of the Ragusan chancery and notary and the preserved Cyrillic and Latin documents of the rulers and nobles of neighboring states represent the primary and most important sources on which the research of this thematic framework is based. The publication of Cyrillic documents, which began in the middle of the 19th century, greatly facilitated the work of historians, and many segments of the past of the states that belonged to the Ragusan economic circle were shed light on. Of particular importance are the collections published by Franz Miklosich, Medo Pucić, Konstantin Jireček and Ljubomir Stojanović.[5]

[4] Franjo Rački, "Prilozi za sbirku srbskih i bosanskih listina", *Rad* JAZU I, Zagreb 1867, 156-158.

[5] Franz Miklosich, *Monumenta serbica spectantia historiam Serbiae Bosnae Ragusii*, Apud Guilelmum Braumúller, Viennae 1858. Medo Pucić, *Spomenici srpski od 1395.-1423. to est pisma pisana od Republike dubrovačke Kraljevima, Despotima, Voivodama i Knezovima Srbskiem, Bosanskiem i Primorskiem* I, Beograd 1858. Konstantin Jireček, *Spomenici srpski*, SKA, Beograd 1892. Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stare srpske povelje i pisma* I/1, 1/2, SKA, Beogad-Sremski Karlovci 1929-1934.

The Latin documents of the Dubrovnik Archives represent the essential starting point of any research into the medieval segment of the states in the Ragusan region. These documents are of great importance for reconstructing the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate. This material was published by József Gelcich and Lajos Thallóczy, Nicolai Iorga, Mihailo Dinić, Andrija Veselinović and Esad Kurtović.[6] This is an extensive collection of material that contributes to the understanding of Bosnia's relationship with the Despotate through the prism of Ragusan strategic interests. Through the documents of this provenance, it can be clearly seen that these are significant areas that the Ragusans clearly perceived as two completely separate subjects.

In addition to the Dubrovnik Archives, the documents from other neighbors, the Kingdom of Hungary, the Kingdom of Naples and the Republic of Venice, are also important for the reconstruction of the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate. Documents from the Hungarian Archives in this case were used through the published sources edited by György Fejér, Jozsef Teleki, Iván Nagy, Albert Nyáry and Lajos Thallóczy and Antál Aldasy.[7] Documents from the Naples Archive were published by

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[6] József Gelcich-Lajos Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium relationum Reipublicae Ragusane cum Regno Hungariae*, Kiadja a m. tud. akadémia tört. bizottsága, Budapest 1887. Nicolai Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir al historie des croisades au XVe siecle* Vol. II, Ernest Leroux, Éditeur, Paris 1899. Mihailo Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, SKA, Beograd 1967. Andrija Veselinović, *Dubrovačko Malo veće o Srbiji (1415-1459)*, SANU, Istorijski institut, Beograd 1997. Esad Kurtović, *Izvori za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne (Ispisi iz knjiga zaduženja državnog arhiva u Dubrovniku 1365–1521)* I/1-I/2, ANUBiH, Sarajevo 2017. Esad Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne (Ispisi iz knjiga kancelarije Državnog arhiva u Dubrovniku 1341-1526)*, Univerzitet u Sarajevu-Institut za historiju-Javna ustanova Historijski arhiv Sarajevo, Sarajevo 2019. Esad Kurtović, *Ispisi građe za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne (Lamenta de foris-Tužbe kaznenih djela učinjenih izvan grada, sv. IV /1419-1422/, Državni arhiv Dubrovnik)*, Sarajevo 2020.

[7] Georgii Fejer, *Codex diplomaticvs Hungariae ecclesiasticvs a civilis*, Tomi X. Volumen V/VI/VIII, Regia Vniversitatis Vngaricae, Budae 1842-1844. Jozsef Teleki, *Hunyadiak kora Magyarországon*, X, Emich Gusztáv könyvnyomdája, Pesten 1853. Iván Nagy-Albert Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai emlekek-Matyas kiraly korabol* I, A.M.T. Akadémia könyvkiadó-hivatalaban, Budapest 1875. Lajos Thallóczy-Antál Aldasy, *Magyarország mellektartomáanyainak oklevéltara*, Hornyánszky Vikgor cs. és kir. udvari könyvnyomdaja, Budapest 1907.

Franjo Rački and Vincentio Macuscev.[8] The source material of the archives in Venice represents significant material for the reconstruction of the political interactions of Bosnian rulers and nobles with Serbian despots. During the preparation of this work, editions of Venetian sources by Šime Ljubić and Joseph Valentini were used.[9]

In addition to archival materials, chronicles also make a significant contribution to the research of the relations between these countries, of which the Ragusan chronicles of Mavro Orbini, Giacomo Luccari and Juni Resti, who wrote their works in a time when the Middle Ages represented a bygone era, stand out in terms of number.[10] Among the Serbian sources, the Hagiography of Despot Stefan Lazarević (1389/1402–1427) by Constantine the Philosopher has been preserved.[11] Ottoman chronicles are only interesting for the last decade of the fall of the Despotate, and the chronicle of Konstantin Mihailović occupies a particularly important place.[12] Chronicles compiled according to authors' own ideas, memories, or knowledge of past events point to the necessary caution and comparison of data from this type of source with other available sources.

[8] Franjo Rački, "Izvadci iz kralj. osrednjega arkiva u napulju za jugoslovjensku poviest", *Arkiv za povjestnicu jugoslavensku* VII, Zagreb 1863, 5-71. Macuscev Vincentio, *Monumenta historica slavorum meridionalium vicinorumque populorum* II, Typographia regni Serbiae, Belgradi 1882.

[9] Šime Ljubić, *Listine o odnošajih izmedju južnoga slavenstva i mletačke republike*, JAZU V-X, Zagreb 1875-1891. Josephi Valentini, *Acta Albaniae Veneta saeculorum XIV et XV*, Pars III, Tomus XIX-XXI, Panormi, Typis Josephi Tosini, Munich 1973-1975.

[10] Giacomo Lvccari, *Copioso Ristretto de gli Annali di Ravsa*, Ad instantia di Antonio Leonardi, Venetia 1605. Restius, *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii item Joanis Gundulae*, Monumenta spectantia historiam slavorum meridionalium, Zagrabiae 1893. Mavro Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, SKZ, Beograd 1968.

[11] Vatroslav Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof i njegov život Stefana Lazarevića despota srpskog", *Glasnik SUD* 42, Beograd 1875, 223-328.

[12] Konstantin Mihailović, *Janičareve uspomene ili turska hronika*, SAN, Beograd 1954.

Historiography on the relations between Bosnia and the Despotate

Various, more specific, episodes of the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate were treated in the less extensive scientific publications by Vladimir Ćorović, Jelena Mrgić, Đuro Tošić and Neven Isailović.[13] The starting points for researching the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate, in the context of the political events of the 15th century, are contained in the syntheses of the Bosnian Middle Ages written by Vjekoslav Klaić and Vladimir Ćorović, the synthesis of the Croatian Cultural Society "Napredak" for which the political history was elaborated by Marko Perojević, and the synthesis of Sima Ćirković.[14] In the syntheses of the Bosnian Middle Ages, the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate was observed from the perspective of mutual political interactions between the two neighbors. While writing the history of Serbia, the circumstances in the Bosnian state were simultaneously covered and

[13] Vladimir Ćorović, "Despot Đurađ Branković prema konavoskom ratu", *Glas SKA* 90, Beograd 1923, 26-39. Jelena Mrgić, "Poslednja dva Kotromanića i Srpska despotovina", in: *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, SANU, Beograd 2011, 195-202. Đuro Tošić, "Bosanska *nazovi* krivica za pad Srpske despotovine", in: *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, 185, 194. Neven Isailović, "Bračni planovi Kotromanića i državna politika Bosne polovinom XV veka", in: *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, 203-214. The following works also belong to newer publications: Enes Dedić, "Relations Between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate in a Regional Context", in: *Medieval Bosnia and South-East European Relations. Political, Religious and Cultural Life at the Adriatic Crossroads*, Arc Humanities Press, 2019, 53-64. Enes Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century (Contribution to knowledge of the marital relations of the rulers and noblemen of the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate)", in: *Bosna i njeni susjedi u srednjem vijeku-pristupi i perspektive*, Univerzitet u Sarajevu-Institut za historiju, Sarajevo 2019, 229-251.

[14] Vjekoslav Klaić, *Poviest Bosne do propasti kraljevstva*, Zagreb 1882. Vladimir Ćorović, *Historija Bosne*, SKA, Beograd 1940. Marko Perojević, in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, HKD, Napredak, Sarajevo 1942. Sima Ćirković, *Istorija srednjovekovne bosanske države*, SKZ, Beograd 1964.

analyzed.[15] The syntheses of Serbian medieval history viewed the Bosnian state as a creation stemming from the earliest Serbian state, interpreting the Bosnian Kingdom and the Despotate in the 15th century through a rigid and closed ideological framework that portrayed them as two Serbian states.

Significant segments of the line of development of political events, elaborated through publications on the most prominent Bosnian nobles of the 15th century Hrvoje Vukčić, Radoslav Pavlović, Sandalj Hranić, and Stjepan Vukčić, represent quality starting points for understanding the actions of Bosnian rulers in this period. The historical context and neighborly character conditioned the relations by which the Bosnian nobles sporadically, to a greater or lesser extent, engaged in direct relations with the Serbian despots. Studies and articles by Jovan Radonić, Aleksa Ivić, Sima Ćirković, and Esad Kurtović are indispensable foundations for the study of political and economic relations between Bosnia and the Despotate.[16] Pavo Živković covered political circumstances from the perspective of the Bosnian king Tvrtko II Tvrtković (1404–1409; 1421–1443), thus covering almost four decades of Bosnian history in the 15th century.[17] The beginning of the reign of King Tomaš was covered by Pejo Ćošković.[18] On the other hand, the political activities of Serbian despots Stefan Lazarević and Đurađ Branković were covered by Miodrag Purković, Andrija Veselinović and Momčilo Spremić.[19]

[15] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I-II. *Istorija srpskog naroda. Od najstarijih vremena do Maričke bitke (1371.) Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, Druga knjiga, SKZ, Beograd 1982. Ćorović, *Istorija Srba*.

[16] Ferdo Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić i njegovo doba*, Izdanje "Matice hrvatske", Zagreb, 1902. Jovan Radonić, "O knezu Pavlu Radenoviću-Priložak istoriji Bosne krajem XIV. i poč. XV. veka", *LMS* 241-242, Novi Sad 1907, 39-60. Aleksa Ivić, "Radoslav Pavlović veliki vojvoda bosanski", *LMS* 241-242, Novi Sad 1907, 1-23, 24-48. Sima Ćirković, *Herceg Stefan Vukčić Kosača i njegovo doba*, SANU, Beograd 1964. Esad Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda bosanski Sandalj Hranić Kosača*, Institut za istoriju, Sarajevo 2009.

[17] Pavo Živković, *Tvrtko II Tvrtković-Bosna u prvoj polovini XV stoljeća*, Institut za istoriju, Sarajevo 1981.

[18] Pejo Ćošković, *Bosanska kraljevina u prijelomnim godinama 1443-1446.*, Institut za istoriju, Banja Luka 1988.

[19] Miodrag Purković, *Knez i despot Stefan Lazarević*, Sveti arhijerejski sinod SPC, Beograd 1978. Andrija Veselinović, *Država srpskih despota*, Novinsko-izdavačka ustanova "Vojska", Beograd 1995. Momčilo Spremić, *Despot Đurađ Branković i njegovo doba*, Glas srpski, Banja Luka 1999.

The treatment of Bosnia's relations with neighboring states contributed to a better understanding of the consequences of major political moves that left their mark on Bosnia and the despots, as well as their mutual relations. Monographs on Bosnia's relations with Hungary, Venice and the Ottoman Empire offered quality methodological approaches that greatly helped the research of this topics as well.[20] Studies on the relations of the Republic of Ragusa with the Hungarians and the Ottomans and the thematically broader publication of Jovan Radonić on the relations of the Balkan peoples with the Ottomans provide breadth in the observation of major political changes in Southeastern Europe, which also reflected on the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate.[21]

Srebrenica, as an extremely important place and subject of disputes between Bosnian kings and Serbian despots, has been treated in historiography in several publications. The results of research on this topic are contained in the works of Mihailo Dinić, Vladimir Ćorović and Desanka Kovačević-Kojić.[22] However, the issue of the change of rulers over Srebrenica in the 15th century has not been consolidated into a separate scientific research. Stable starting points for further study of the economic relations between Bosnia and the Despotate, due to the specificity of the economic system of this region centered in Ragusa, are contained in the publications

[20] Marko Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija (odnosi u XIV. i XV. st.)*, HKD Napredak, Sarajevo 1996. Mladen Ančić, *Putanja klatna (Ugarsko-hrvatsko kraljevstvo i Bosna u XIV. stoljeću)*, Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru-Ziral, Zadar-Mostar, 1997. Dubravko Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti (Sveta kruna ugarska i sveta kruna bosanska) 1387-1463*, Synopsis, Zagreb -Sarajevo 2006. Emir O. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo (1386–1463)*, Orijentalni institut, Sarajevo 2019.

[21] Jovan Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa i balkanski narodi prema Turcima u prvoj polovini XV veka*, Izdanje Matice Srpske, Novi Sad 1905. Ivan Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska u XIV i XV veku*, SKA, Beograd 1952. Dušanka Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska u srednjem veku*, Filozofski fakultet-Institut za istoriju, Novi Sad 1986.

[22] Vladimir Ćorović, "Srebrenica za vlade despota Stevana (1413–1427)", *PKJIF* 2, Beograd 1922, 61-77. Tatomir Vukanović, "Srebrnica u srednjem veku", *Glasnik Državnog muzeja u Sarajevu*, Nova serija 1946, sv. 1, Sarajevo 1946, 51-80. Mihailo Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva u srednjevekovnoj Srbiji i Bosni* I, SKA, Beograd 1955., Mihailo Dinić, "Srebrenik kraj Srebrenice", in: *Srpske zemlje u srednjem veku*, SKZ, Beograd 1987, 357-367. Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, *Srednjovjekovna Srebrenica XIV-XV vijek*, SANU, Beograd 2010.

of Mihailo Dinić, Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, Andrija Veselinović and Esad Kurtović.[23] Existing scholarly achievements regarding the religious background of mutual relations between Bosnia and the Despotate, are presented in books and articles by Miloš Blagojević, Marija Janković, and Boris Nilević.[24] The efforts of earlier authors in determining the borders between Bosnia and the Despotate resulted in different findings. Mihailo Dinić's research on the border in the southern parts of Bosnia and the Despotate, which can be followed since 1427, still represents a quality starting point for potential further elaboration of this problem.[25] The border in the northern areas was dealt with in the research of Andrija Veselinović, Siniša Mišić and Jelena Mrgić. A detailed insight into the source material made it necessary to additionally revise the findings from these publications.[26]

The treatment of mutual relations between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate falls within the category of topics outlined in the 1980s project "Društveni cilj XIII/2" under the auspices of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, this project has not been finalized.[27] An overview of the available source material and the

[23] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I. Desanka Kovačević, *Trgovina u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni*, Naučno društvo NR Bosne i Hercegovine, Sarajevo 1961. Mihailo Dinić, "Dubrovačka srednjovekovna karavanska trgovina", *JIČ* 3/1-4, Ljubljana-Zagreb-Beograd 1937, 119-146. Andrija Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi trgovine u Srbiji u doba Despotovine", *IG* 1-2, Beograd 1983, 25-42. Esad Kurtović, *Konj u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni*, Univerzitet u Sarajevu, Sarajevo 2014.

[24] Marija Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije srpske crkve u srednjem veku*, Narodna knjiga-Istorijski institut Beograd, Beograd 1985. Miloš Blagojević, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i Mileševa", in: *Zbornik radova Mileševa u istoriji srpskog naroda*, SANU, Beograd 1987, 165-174. Boris Nilević, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva u BiH do obnove pećke patrijaršije 1557. godine*, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo 1990. Marija Janković, "Crkvena organizacija na teritoriji Kosača", in: *Srpska proza danas. Kosače-Osnivači Hercegovine*, Bileća-Gacko-Beograd 2002, 494-505.

[25] Mihailo Dinić, "Zemlje hercega svetog Save", *Glas* CLXXXII, Beograd 1940, 241-243. Mihailo Dinić, "Oblast Brankovića", *PKJIF* XXVI/1-2, Beograd 1960, 10-11.

[26] Andrija Veselinović, "Granica između Srbije i Bosne u XV veku", in: *Bosna i Hercegovina od srednjeg veka do novijeg vremena*, Istorijski institut SANU, Beograd 1995, 87-100. Jelena Mrgić, *Severna Bosna 13.-16. vek*, Istoriji institut SANU, Beograd 2008, 113-122. Siniša Mišić, "Obnova Despotovine i njene granice (1444-1459)," in: *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, 68-69. Siniša Mišić, *Istorijska geografija srpskih zemalja od 6. do polovine 16. veka*, Magelan Pres, Beograd 2014, 51-52.

[27] *Izvedbeni projekt Društvenog cilja XIII-2. Istraživanje iz oblasti istorije*, Sarajevo 1986, 17-18.

current state of historiography regarding the treatment of the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate, unequivocally indicates the need for detailed and comprehensive research, which would shed light on this segment of the rich Bosnian history of the 15th century. A great starting position, based on previous achievements, represents fertile ground for the grafting of new knowledge from sources of different provenance, quality and credibility. With a critical review of previous historiography and sources, but also with a dose of self-criticism, this work presents propositions and conclusions that do not exhaust the ultimate scope of the given thematic framework.

Bosnia and Serbia until the 15th century

The lack of a comprehensive study that would, based on a thorough research of the sources, show the processes and mutual relations of the areas where the Bosnian and Serbian states developed from the earliest times until 1402, makes it difficult to define the starting position of the research on the relationship between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate. For more than five centuries, Bosnia and Serbia experienced various transformations that were inevitably reflected at the beginning of the 15th century. The situation is further complicated by the already mentioned burden of historiography, that is, the formation of constructions about the character of political spaces that, as a kind of consensus, were initially implanted in scientific circles, and then became established as a general understanding.

The Bosnian Kingdom, which we recognize at the beginning of the 15th century, was preceded by five centuries of long processes in various stages of development. The core of the medieval Bosnian state developed in the Visoko area on both sides of the river Bosna.[28] The oldest data on the formation of the state organization in chronological terms refer to the period of the 10th and 11th centuries.[29] In the 11th century at the latest, a larger political-geographical territory was formed that had the basic characteristics of an early feudal state.[30] The growth of feudal state norms until the 12th century took place in the occasional change of political dominance of Byzantium, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia and Dioclea. The degree of vassalage in these cases did

[28] Pavao Anđelić, "Teritorijalno širenje imena Bosna u prvim stoljećima razvitka" in: *Studije o teritorijalno političkoj organizaciji srednjovjekovne Bosne*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo 1982, 31-32.

[29] Anto Babić, "O pitanju formiranja srednjovjekovne bosanske države", *Radovi* III, Sarajevo 1955, 67-68, 77-78. Tibor Živković, "O počecima Bosne u ranom srednjem vijeku", *Godišnjak CBI* 39, Sarajevo 2010, 154, 157. Dubravko Lovrenović, "U početku bijaše bosanska…", *BF* 42, Sarajevo 2015, 38.

[30] Babić, "O pitanju formiranja srednjovjekovne bosanske države", 78-79.

not derive from the legally established position of the state towards another state, but from the current balance of power and general circumstances that influenced that relationship.[31] The supremacy of neighboring states did not call into question, nor did it interrupt independent political development. The understanding of the Bosnian state with a unique ethnic element known as *Bošnjani* (Bosnians) since the 12th century was established among contemporaries.[32] The neighboring counties of Lepenica, Trstivnica, Vidogošća, Lašva and Brod were added to the original Bosnian core centered around the Visoko area and the Sarajevo valley. Further territorial development included more distant counties in the direction of the north, northwest and northeast. An advanced state, by the 12th century at the latest, developed into the Bosnian Banate. By the end of the 12th century, the neighboring regions of Usora, Soli, Donji Kraji and Podrinje were part of the Bosnian state.[33] The reign of the first Bosnian bans Borić (1153–1163) and Kulin (1180–1204) represents a turning point in Bosnian presence and recognition at the regional and European level. During this time, state institutions, borders, and the political and economic activities of rulers came to the fore, earning them exceptional respect from their neighbors.[34]

During the 13th and early 14th centuries, Bosnia entered into a strong internal and external political struggle for existence. Since the time of the first Bosnian bans, relations of a changing character have been recorded with the Kingdom of Hungary, the most powerful neighbor, which extended its pretensions to Bosnia, and above all to the western parts of the Donji Kraji.[35] At the end of the 13th century, Bosnia came under attack from the

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[31] Babić, "O pitanju formiranja srednjovjekovne bosanske države", 78-79. Nada Klaić, *Srednjovjekovna Bosna –Politički položaj bosanskih vladara do Tvrtkove krunidbe (1377. g.)*, Eminex, Zagreb 1994, 28. Lovrenović, "U početku bijaše bosanska…", 43.

[32] Lovrenović, "U početku bijaše bosanska…", 43, 45.

[33] Anđelić, "Teritorijalno širenje imena Bosna u prvim stoljećima razvitka", 33.

[34] About Bans Borić and Kulin, see: Vladimir Ćorović, "Ban Borić i njegovi potomci", *Glas* CLXXXII, Beograd 1940, 47-61. Marko Perojević, "Ban Borić i ban Kulin", in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 196-204.

[35] Ćorović, *Historija*, 190-208. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 216-243.

Šubić princes of Bribir, who took over a part of the state and assumed the title of Bosnian ban. The Bosnian ruling dynasty Kotromanić restored the unity of the state in the 1320s and regained control over the entire state territory.[36] Ban Stjepan II Kotromanić (1322–1353) greatly expanded the borders of the state and additionally strengthened the position of the Bosnian ruler in the state. One of the more significant expansionist moves was the conquest of Hum, which was previously part of the Serbian state. It is important to single out the conquests of the Krajina region and, towards the west, the area of Livno, Duvno, and Glamoč fields. Stjepan II ensured that the Bosnian state, for the first time in history, had access to the sea and thus brought the state closer to the Mediterranean world. According to the statement from his own charter, he had authority over the territory from the Sava river to the Adriatic Sea and between the Drina and Cetina rivers.[37] The expansionist policy was continued by Tvrtko Kotromanić, who further strengthened the Bosnian state, expanding its borders and establishing its positions in international politics. Tvrtko extended his rule to parts of Polimlje, Gornje Podrinje, Gacko, Konavle, Trebinje and Dračevica, which was previously part of the Serbian state, and to parts of Croatia and Dalmatia, with the exception of Zadar and Ragusa.[38] The reigns of the Bans Stjepan II and Tvrtko provided the basis for the elevation of the Bosnian state to a higher rank. Thanks to the ties with the Nemanjić dynasty, Tvrtko was crowned king in 1377. With this, the Bosnian political space took on the framework that existed until the end of the Bosnian medieval state.[39]

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[36] Ćorović, *Historija*, 216-243. Marko Perojević, "Šubići gospodari Bosne", in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 239–249. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 77-88.

[37] Vladimir Ćorović, "Teritorijalni razvoj bosanske države", *Glas* CLXVII, Beograd 1935, 32-35. About Ban Stjepan II, see: Ćorović, *Historija*, 243-275. Marko Perojević, "Ban Stjepan II. Kotromanić", in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 250–285. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 88-121.

[38] Ćorović, "Teritorijalni razvoj bosanske države", 39-41.

[39] Vladimir Ćorović, *Kralj Tvrtko I Kotromanić*, SKA, Beograd 1925, 31-90. Perojević, "Ban Stjepan Tvrtko", in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 313-349. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 121-139

Tvrtko's rule represented the period in which Bosnia was the most powerful state on the eastern coast of the Adriatic, stretching between the rivers Una, Sava, Drina and the Adriatic Sea.

The medieval Bosnian state largely developed according to the Western European feudal model. Along with the development of the state organization of medieval Bosnia, there was also the formation of institutional frameworks on which the organization of the state rested. The Bosnian feudal system was based on land ownership, which was called *baština* (heritage). The bonds of personal dependence, which represented the bond between the ruler and the noblemen, represented the basis on which the state organization rested. "Faithful service" refers to the entirety of the obligations owed by a nobleman to a ruler, whether as service or individual actions that were the motive for gifting land property. On the other hand, by giving the "noble faith", the ruler committed himself to the inviolability of the nobleman's property and life as long as the nobleman is subordinated to him and fulfills his obligations..[40] *Sabor* (assembly), also called *stanak, rusag Bosanski, sva Bosna* or *zbor*, represented the most important state institution, and was first mentioned in 1354. In ordinary circumstances, the ruler convened it, and the most prominent nobles participated. At the assembly, the most important state decisions were made, such as launching military campaigns, negotiating peace agreements, choosing rulers, resolving disputes, that is, investigating committed treason. It was common for the ruler to issue charters after holding assemblies regulating relations with individual nobles, while other attending nobles were referred to as witnesses in these charters. In times of crisis, the nobility upheld the institution of the assembly, which represented a significant lever for the survival of the state and the *baština* (heritage) system.[41] The territorial organization of the Bosnian state is based on the system of a county headed by *župan* (prefect) who was initially subject to the ruler, and later to more prominent nobles.[42]

[40] Sima Ćirković, "Verna služba i vjera gospodska", *ZFFB* VI-2, Beograd 1962, 95-112.

[41] Mihailo Dinić, *Državni sabor srednjevekovne bosanske države*, SKA, Beograd 1955, 5-6.

[42] Pavao Anđelić, "Osnovne značajke teritorijalnopolitičke organizacije u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni", in:

Sources trace the first state organization among the Serbs from the 9th century. The first princes known by name were Višeslav, Radoslav and Prosigoj, but no more details are known about their rule. The original area included the areas on the Lim river, the upper Drina, together with Piva and Tara rivers, the Ibar valley and the upper course of the western Morava. More details are only known about the reign of Prince Vlastimir from the middle of the 9th century. He was succeeded by his sons Mutimir, Strojnik and Gojnik. The strong expansion of the Bulgarian Empire from the middle of the 9th to the end of the 10th century and the Byzantine supremacy in the 11th century seriously questioned the survival of Raška. There are known Serbian princes from this period who did not rule for a long time and were often at the service of Bulgarian and Byzantine expansionist interests. The relationship between Raška and Byzantium was not only military-political. From this period, the influence of Byzantium was felt in almost all elements of political, cultural and religious life. With the establishment of the Ohrid Archbishopric at the beginning of the 11th century, which included the area of Raška, this territory was, in the church's view, incorporated into the Byzantine religious circle. Despite the pressures, the territory of the Serbian state at this time was expanded to include Travunija, Konavle and the Principality of Neretva.[43] Along with the gradual decline in the power of the Byzantine Empire at the end of the 11th century, more favorable conditions were created for state development. However, the Serbian rulers of that time, who were often subject to the Byzantine emperors, found themselves in the gap of Byzantine-Hungarian conflicts that prevented the formation of a stronger state core. The characteristic of this period is the expansion of state territories towards the southeast, in

Studije o teritorijalnopolitičkoj organizaciiji srednjovjekovne Bosne, 12-13.

[43] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 112-137. Sima Ćirković, "Obrazovanje srpske države", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda. Od najstarijih vremena do Maričke bitke (1371)*, 141-155. Sima Ćirković, "Srbija između Vizantijskog carstva i Bugarske", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Od najstarijih vremena do Maričke bitke (1371)*, 156-169. Ljubomir Maksimović, "Trijumf Vizantije početkom XI veka", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Od najstarijih vremena do Maričke bitke (1371)*, 170-179. Sima Ćirković, *Srbi u srednjem veku*, Izdavačka zadruga Idea, Beograd 1995, 15-48. Miloš Blagojević, *Srpska državnost u srednjem veku*, SKZ, Beograd 2011, 68.

the direction of Kosovo. The weakening of Byzantine supremacy occurred at the end of the 12th century, and simultaneously with the coming to power of the Nemanjić dynasty, whose most important representatives at this time were the Grand *Župan* (prefect) Stefan Nemanja (1168–1196) and his son Stefan Nemanjić (the Grand *Župan* (prefect) 1196–1217; King 1217–1227).[44] At the end of the 12th century, the Grand *Župan* Stefan Nemanja managed to expand the state borders and finally secure the independence of his state from Byzantium. Then the state territory was expanded to include Zeta, Metohija, Pomoravlje, Kosovo, Niš and Prizren regions, Skopje and the area of the upper course of the Vardar, and a little earlier the Serbian rulers gained power over Zahumlje. His son and successor Stefan Nemanjić was crowned king in 1217, with the help of Pope Honorius III (1216–1227).[45] This act established the Serbian Kingdom with the hereditary Nemanjić dynasty, which existed until the middle of the 14th century.

In the late 13th century, King Dragutin (1282–1321) initiated the conquest of Byzantine territories, thereby directing the expansion of the state to the south. During his reign, the state territory was extended to Durrës and the area in northern Macedonia, around Skopje, Ovče Polje, Polog and Debar. This period was marked by the division of territories between Dragutin and his brother, the former king, Milutin (1276–1282), who ruled Mačva, Srem and territory in northeastern Bosnia. After Dragutin's death, he was succeeded by his son King Vladislav (1316–1324), whom King Milutin defeated and annexed most of his territories to his state.[46] Significant expansionist progress of the Serbian state was recorded during the reign of King Dušan

[44] Jovanka Kalić, "Srpski veliki župani u borbi s Vizantijom", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda. Od najstarijih vremena do Maričke bitke (1371)*, 197-211. Ćirković, *Srbi u srednjem veku*, 49-50. Blagojević, *Srpska državnost u srednjem veku*, 68.

[45] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 162-172. Jovanka Kalić, "Borbe i tekovine velikog župana Stefana Nemanje", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda. Od najstarijih vremena do Maričke bitke (1371)*, 251-261. Jovanka Kalić, "Odbrana Nemanjinog nasleđa-Srbija postaje kraljevina", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Od najstarijih vremena do Maričke bitke (1371)*, 297-314.

[46] Jovanka Kalić, "Počeci osvajačke politike", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda. Od najstarijih vremena do Maričke bitke (1371)*, 437-448.

(King 1331–1346; Emperor 1346–1355). Immediately upon ascending to the throne, Dušan launched attacks on Byzantine possessions towards the Aegean Sea. These campaigns resulted in the conquest of Prilep, Ohrid and Strumica, and the subsequent military campaigns, in addition to possessions in southern Macedonia, of which Ser stands out, also secured the authority over Berat, Kanina and Kroja in Albania. Having conquered Ser, Dušan crowned himself emperor in 1346, raising the Serbian state to the highest level of medieval state organization.[47]

The Serbian Empire did not last long. After Dušan's death in 1355, his son Uroš (1355–1371) came to the throne, during whose reign acquired territories were gradually reduced and the nobility was strengthened, which over time created positions for independent political activity. With the death of Uroš in 1371, the Serbian Empire formally disappeared. It marked the culmination of the process of strengthening Serbian nobles who, through separate and divided territories, acted independently and often came into conflict with each other. On the ruins of the Serbian state, Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović, Vuk Branković the lords of Zeta from the Balšić family, stood out among the many regional lords.[48] During the 1370s and 1380s, Prince Lazar increasingly expanded his possessions at the expense of regional neighboring lords. On the foundations of Lazar's possession, which was reduced after the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, the Serbian Despotate was established, which was ruled by his son and successor Stefan Lazarević. This was the area of Moravian Serbia, which included the basin of the three Morava rivers and roughly extended from Kosovo to the Sava and Danube and from the lower Lim and Drina rivers to the Homolj mountains.[49]

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[47] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 212-222. Božidar Ferjančić, "Osvajačka politika kralja Dušana", in: I*storija srpskog naroda. Od najstarijih vremena do Maričke bitke (1371)*, 511-523. Ćirković, *Srbi u srednjem veku*, 111-155.

[48] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 236-254. Rade Mihaljčić, *Kraj srpskog carstva*, BIGZ, Beograd 1989, 11-187. Ćirković, *Srbi u srednjem veku*, 163-168. Rade Mihaljčić, *Lazar Hrebeljanović-istorija kult predanje*, Srpska školska knjiga, Beograd 2001, 29-77. Marko Šuica, *Vuk Branković-slavni i velmožni gospodin*, Evoluta, Beograd 2014, 39-74.

[49] Rade Mihaljčić, "Doba oblasnih gospodara", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje*

The state and social organization of the Serbs mostly developed according to the Byzantine model. At the head of the Serbian state, power holders with the titles of princes, grand prefects (*župani*), kings and emperors were recorded. Serbian grand prefects (*župani*) did not rule the state centrally, but shared power with their closest relatives. This is how the territories within the Serbian state were created, which in historiography are characterized by the term "divided principality."[50] In Serbia, from the earliest times, there existed the institution of the state assembly, which was convened by the ruler, and ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries took part, where they deliberated on matters brought forward by the ruler.[51] The proclamation of the empire led to the assumption of Byzantine titles. From this time, the Serbian emperors awarded their prominent dignitaries the titles of *despot, caesar* and *sebastokrator,* while the titles of protovestiyar and logothete were established at the royal court. A Byzantine institution of *kephale*, which referred to the officials appointed by the ruler to manage certain town settlements and the surrounding area in his name and with his authority, was adopted.[52] With the occasional conquest of Byzantine territories in the Serbian state, the system of pronoia expanded, which referred to the conditional land ownership by people who were subordinate to the pronoetes, a warrior who was obliged to perform military service.[53]

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i obnovu države (1371-1537), 28. Miloš Blagojević, "Pregled istorijske geografije srednjovekovne Srbije", *ZIMS* 20, Beograd 1983, 112-117. Veselinović, *Država srpskih despota*, 112.

[50] Blagojević, *Nemanjići i Lazarevići i srpska srednjovekovna državnost*, 18. Blagojević, *Srpska državnost u srednjem veku*, 121. There also existed the institution of co-rulership, or the principle by which the heir to the throne would receive the title "young king." The institution of co-rulership continued to exist even after the establishment of the Empire, through the perspective of the rule of the emperor's son, or the heir to the throne with the title of king in a certain part of the state. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 11. Milka Ivković, "Ustanova mladog kralja u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji", *IG* 3-4, Beograd 1957, 79. Ćirković, *Srbi u srednjem veku*, 155.

[51] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 260. Nikola Radojčić, *Srpski državni sabor u srednjem veku*, SKA, Beograd 1940, 200-214.

[52] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 24-25.

[53] About pronoia with an overview of the older literature, see: Miloš Ivanović, "Pronija u državi srpskih despota", *ZRVI* LIII, Beograd 2016, 324-341.

The medieval Bosnian state cultivated relations with countries throughout East-Central Europe, as well as with distant states. The fact that Bosnian rulers and nobility established and maintained mutual relations with more than twenty political entities, dating back to the 10th century, demonstrates the distinctiveness of Bosnian statehood in medieval international politics. With regard to the typology of these relationships, a wide range of character elements has been identified, among which political, economic, cultural, and religious relationships prevail. The primary function of states determines the political form of relations as quantitatively the most represented, while geographical features mark the most frequent relations with neighboring states. According to this principle, medieval Bosnia developed the most intensive relations of a military-political type with Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Serbia, while economic activity is represented through the prism of relations with Ragusa, Venice and Kotor, with the emphasis that even these relations were not without military-political consequences. The religious aspect involved interactions with the Roman Curia and Hungary. In addition to these states, the Bosnian state intensively maintained relations, of different types, with Byzantium, Dioclea, Croatia, Naples, Kotor and the Dalmatian communes, while Bosnian diplomacy also reached Bulgaria, Germany, Poland, Milan, Florence and other parts of the world at that time.[54]

According to its type, Bosnia's relations with Serbia and the remnants of the Serbian Empire until the 15th century were military-political, with emphasized expansionist elements in line with its stated strategic interests. The situation on the ground also changed as a result of the changes in priorities of the Bosnian and Serbian rulers. The relations between the Bosnian and Serbian states recorded in the 10th century cannot be followed continuously until the 13th century, which indicates the weak intensity of neighboring relations and the different foreign policy performances of the Bosnian and

[54] Historiography has paid more attention to the international relations of medieval Bosnia in the last few decades. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*. Ančić, *Putanja klatna*. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*.

Serbian rulers in which interest spheres were not significantly aligned.[55] These relations became more intense only in the first half of the 14th century, during the reign of Ban Stjepan II in Bosnia and King Stefan of Dečani (1321–1331) and his successor, King and Emperor Dušan in Serbia. Significant military contacts occurred that resulted in the expansion of Bosnian borders and the conquest of Hum, which in earlier centuries was part of the Kingdom of Serbia.[56] Along with the collapse of the Serbian Empire, favorable conditions for additional expansion of Bosnian borders were achieved. Due to the active involvement of Ban Tvrtko in the conflicts between the feuding Serbian regional lords, Podrinje, Polimlje, Trebinje, Konavle and Dračevica were annexed to the Bosnian state in the 1370s.[57] The epilogue of the intense, half-century-long relations between Bosnia and Serbia is reflected in Tvrtko's coronation in 1377. As a result of the power he had accumulated, he acquired the vacant crown through his family ties with the Serbian royal dynasty as well as the possession of a portion of the former Serbian state. This provided a pathway to elevate the state to the rank of a kingdom.[58] This act of assuming the Serbian crown did not have lasting consequences for Bosnia's relations with Serbian regional lords. King Tvrtko I and his successors did not influence the political processes on the territory controlled by the Serbian regional lords, nor did they come into close relations with the Serbian Orthodox Church, and therefore were not incorporated into the Serbian political and religious tradition. The character of the new kingdom remained exclusive-

[55] Stanojević, *Istorija srpskog naroda*, 113. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 204-205. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 47-48. Ćorović, *Istorija Srba*, 163. Ćirković, *Srbi u srednjem veku*, 111.

[56] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 320-321. Ćorović, "Teritorijalni razvoj bosanske države", 32-34. Veljan Trpković, "Branivojevići", *IG* 3-4, Beograd 1960, 69-81. Veljan Trpković, "Kad je Stepan II Kotromanić prvi put prodro u Hum", *IG* 1-2, Beograd 1960, 151-153. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 89-90. Mrgić-Radojčić, "Rethinking the Territorial Development", 56-57. Nedim Rabić, "Odnosi Bosne i Srbije u vrijeme Stjepana II Kotromanića", *HT* 5, Sarajevo 2010, 168-169.

[57] Ćorović, *Kralj Tvrtko I Kotromanić*, 34-40. Mihailo Dinić, *O Nikoli Altomanoviću*, SKA, Beograd 1932, 25-28. Ćorović, "Teritorijalni razvoj bosanske države", 39-40. Mihaljčić, *Kraj srpskog carstva*, 227-242.

[58] About Tvrtko's coronation with an overview of older literature, see: Dubravko Lovrenović, "Proglašenje Bosne kraljevstvom 1377.", *Forum Bosnae* 3-4, Sarajevo 1999, 227-287.

ly Bosnian, while the areas conquered by Serbian rulers and nobles in the following period developed as an integral part of the Bosnian Kingdom and as a possession of the Bosnian nobility, although their ethnic and religious background was mostly Serbian and Orthodox. In the following decades, the political development of the Serbian territories took place independently of the Bosnian influence, and it reached its political peak at the beginning of the 15th century with the establishment of the Serbian Despotate under the rule of Stefan Lazarević.

I

UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF HUNGARIAN FOREIGN POLICY (1402–1415)

I
UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF HUNGARIAN FOREIGN POLICY (1402–1415)

Circumstances in Bosnia at the turn of the century

In the last years of the 14th century, there were changes in both the internal and external policy of the Bosnian state. The brief reign of Queen Jelena (1395–1398) allowed the strengthened Bosnian nobility to come to the forefront. Among the most important political figures of this period is Duke Hrvoje Vukčić, while the narrow mosaic of Bosnian magnates also included Duke Sandalj Hranić, Prince Pavao Radinović and Duke Radič Sanković, who, after his release from captivity, and at the time of the change on the throne, appeared again on the political stage. The guardians of the Bosnian crown, personified in the reflection of the most powerful Bosnian nobility, after the interregnum aimed directly at thwarting the coronation of the Hungarian king Sigismund of Luxembourg (1387–1437) with the Bosnian crown, felt new currents and the necessary need for a more aggressive foreign policy. The change on the Bosnian throne, that occurred in May 1398, when King Stjepan Ostoja (1398–1404; 1409–1418) was brought to power, was a natural continuation of the historical course.

The distancing of the Bosnian king and nobles from the recognition of Sigismund's right to the Bosnian crown naturally led them to join his opponent, the Neapolitan king Ladislaus (1386–1414). Before the expeditious Ragusan envoys arrived with congratulations at Ostoja's court, Sigismund began a months-long unsuccessful campaign against Duke Hrvoje, who was accused of collaborating with the Ottomans, in early June 1398.[59]

[59] Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 129. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 194. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 180.

That was the beginning of unsuccessful Hungarian campaigns towards the subjugation of the Bosnian Kingdom. In cooperation with King Ladislaus, the Bosnian noblemen from 1400 were again involved in his occupation of Dalmatian cities and his ambitions for the Hungarian crown. Additional motives for their actions came from Buda, where dissatisfied nobles imprisoned Sigismund in the spring of 1401. In June, King Ostoja and Hrvoje set out to conquer Dalmatian towns. After short negotiations, Split recognized the authority of Ladislaus, while Trogir and Šibenik did so in May of the following year. King Ostoja guaranteed autonomy to the towns as it was in Tvrtko's time. Ladislaus himself soon got involved in the situation. His galleys, with Hrvoje's help, conquered Split. After several successful campaigns, the nobility from Primorje to Drava submitted to Ladislaus. His coronation as the Hungarian king in Zadar in August 1403 had little impact. It was the result of King Sigismund's weakness, who was preoccupied with issues arising from the nobility in Hungary.[60] As a result of his accomplishments in Dalmatia, King Ladislaus appointed Hrvoje as Herzog of Split at the beginning of November 1403, giving him the authority over Split and the islands of Brač, Hvar and Korčula.[61] Ladislaus did not take the opportunity to defeat Sigismund, so he returned to Italy at the end of 1403, and Dalmatia consequently came into the hands of the Bosnian nobles.[62]

[60] Marko Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja", in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 383-389. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 194-196.

[61] Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja", 390. Dubravko Lovrenović, "Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić i splitska komuna 1403–1413", *Prilozi* XXII/23, Sarajevo 1987, 37.

[62] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 194-196.

Echoes of the Battle of Angora and the establishment of the Despotate

While the Bosnian nobles were actively involved in the Dalmatian communes, the Serbian nobles were sharpening their swords for a new campaign as Ottoman vassals. At the beginning of the 15th century, the Ottoman Empire was threatened by the invasion of the Mongols under the leadership of Timur Lenk (1370–1405) from Samarkand. The Turkish emirs from Asia Minor, whose territories were conquered by Sultan Bayezid I (1389–1402), joined Timur's service, and because of this he demanded the return of their lands. The decisive battle between Timur's and Bayezid's armies took place at the end of July 1402 near Angora.

In this battle, Serbian nobles were on the Sultan's side, the sons of Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović, Princes Stefan and Vuk Lazarević and their cousins Grgur and Đurađ Branković (1427–1456), sons of Vuk Branković. The Ottoman detachments on the field near Angora suffered a defeat.[63] Rumors of the Ottoman defeat spread across Europe. According to the captain of a Candian galley, Juan Cornaro, after the Ottoman defeat, Timur captured Bayezid and his wife, the daughter of Prince Lazar, and burned the town of Brusa. At the beginning of August 1402, the captain of the Venetian galley, Marco Grimani, wrote to the Doge in Venice that the entire Ottoman army was scattered and on the run. In October, Gerardo Sagredo reported that Timur's army initially defeated four of Bayezid's troops, in which, among others, the "son of Prince Lazar" was in command, referring to Stefan Lazarević. Claims about the capture of Stefan's sister are also recorded in Serbian chronicles, while Stefan is portrayed as one of the heroes of this battle.[64]

[63] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 336. Gavro Škrivanić, "Angorska bitka (28. jula 1402)", *VIG* II, Beograd 1964, 58. About the Serbian captives after the battle of Angora, see: Milica Grković, "Imena zarobljenih ratnika Stefana Lazarevića u Samarkandu", *Onomatološki prilozi* II, Beograd 1981, 93-100.

[64] Vaso Milinčević, "Građa venecijanskog arhiva o Angorskoj bici 1402", *IG* 1-2, Beograd 1982, 122-126. Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stari srpski rodoslovi i letopisi*, SKA, Sremski Karlovci 1927, 289.

According to the Hagiography of Constantine the Philosopher, the defeat at Angora for Stefan represented liberation from the Ottomans, who enslaved him after the Battle of Kosovo in 1389.[65] Of the Serbian nobles, Grgur Branković had the worst fate in this battle because he was captured for some time. However, he was soon ransomed from Mongolian slavery.[66]

After the Battle of Angora, Prince Stefan Lazarević headed for Constantinople, where he was met by John VII Palaiologos, the co-ruler and nephew of Manuel II Palaiologos (1395–1421), who was in Europe. In August 1402, John granted Prince Stefan the title of a despot, which in the Byzantine hierarchy came immediately after the imperial title. This move by the Byzantine co-ruler was prompted by the need for an ally before the Ottoman incursions. At this time, Byzantium was constrained by Ottoman conquests, exhausted by frequent wars and paying tribute.[67] At the same time, negotiations were conducted regarding Stefan's marriage to Helena, the sister of Empress Irene.[68] In Constantinople, there was a conflict between the Lazarevićs and Brankovićs. This made it possible for Stefan to imprison Đurađ, but he quickly freed himself. After his release, Đurađ went to Suleiman, the son of Sultan Bayazid I, who was on the European territories of the Ottoman Empire. Due to the unsafe roads in the Balkan states, the Lazarevićs returned to Serbia in a Genoese ship. They stayed in Mytilene with Francesco II Gatilusio because of Stefan's marriage to his daughter. In September 1402, they sailed to Bar with their sister Jelena, the wife of Đurađ

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[65] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 270.

[66] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 336.

[67] Georgije Ostrogorski, *Istorija Vizantije*, Prosveta, Beograd 1969, 514-517. Ivan Đurić, *Sumrak Vizantije-Vreme Jovana VIII Paleologa 1392-1448*, Prosveta, Beograd 2007, 15-16.

[68] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 278. Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 104. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 342. Stojan Novaković, "Vizantijski činovi i titule", *Glas* SKA LXXVIII, Beograd 1908, 277. Ilarion Ruvarac, "Stefan Lazarević na povratku iz Angore u Srbiju", in: *Zbornik Ilariona Ruvarca-Odabrani istoriski radovi I (Politička istorija, istorija književnosti, istoriska geografija i kritika)*, SKA, Beograd 1934, 81. Jorjo Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*, Dubrovnik 1939, 55. Božidar Ferjančić, *Despoti u Vizantiji i južnoslovenskim zemljama*, SANU, Beograd 1960, 182. Jovanka Kalić, "Veliki preokret", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 65-66. Jovanka Kalić, "Despot Stefan i Vizantija", *ZRVI* XLIII, Beograd 2006, 32.

II Stracimirović Balšić (1385–1403).[69] His family had no information about the months-long return of Stefan Lazarević from Asia Minor. In September 1402, Stefan's mother, Princess Milica, and her daughter Mara appealed to the Ragusans to give them a brigantine that would go *in partibus Leuantis* in search of their sons, who were rumored to have survived *conflictu dato Turchis per Tartaros*. The Ragusans agreed to the requests and soon prepared to send the ship.[70] Apparently, at that time, Milica and Mara had no information about the split in the Serbian camp in Constantinople. In the following months, the Ragusan authorities discussed sending envoys to search for the Serbian nobles and maintained ties with their families. At the end of October, they also had information about their movement towards Ulcinj and Bar.[71] The united forces of the Brankovićs and Suleiman tried to prevent the Lazarevićs from returning to their possessions. The battle took place in mid-November 1402 near the Gračanica Monastery in Kosovo. There, Lazarević's detachments defeated the united Brankovićs and Ottomans.[72] Stjepan's acquisition of the title of despot changed his political position in many ways. Although even before the Battle of Angora he was known as the most powerful nobleman among the Serbian nobles, by rising to the rank of despot, Stefan received much-needed support for the establishment of the state. The association with the Nemanjić dynasty represented an additional lever on which his ruling ambitions found the necessary legitimacy. Since

[69] For details on Stefan's movements after the Battle of Angora, see: Ruvarac, "Stefan Lazarević na povratku iz Angore u Srbiju", 79-87. Purković, *Knez i despot Stefan Lazarević*, 63-70.

[70] "possendi oferre domine comitisse comitis Lazari et domine Mare relicte Volcho Branchouich unum brigantinum armatum expensis nostris comunis promittendo in partibus Levantis ad querendum filios dictare dominarum qui dicuntur aufugisse salui a conflictu dicto Turchis per Tartaros"; "pro mittendo ad querendum dictos eorem brigantium et galeas" (1. 9. 1402) Dubrovnik State Archives (hereafter: DSA), Reformationes XXXII, 198.

[71] "In dicto minori consilio captum fuit de faciendo gratiam ser Theodoro de Mlaschagna et ser Marino Blaxi de Gradi quod possit ire cum nostra galleotta itura ad comittes Sclauoniam" (22. 10. 1402) Ref. XXII, 14v. "usque Dulcinium dominis comitibus Sclauonie" (22. 10. 1410) Ibid., 124. "de mittendo ambassiata nostrorum nobilium Antibarum ad dictas dominos comites Sclauonie" Ibid., 124v.

[72] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 338. Ruvarac, "Stefan Lazarević na povratku iz Angore", 84. Kalić, "Veliki preokret", 67-68. Kalić, "Despot Stefan i Vizantija", 32. Momčilo Spremić, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i gospodin Đurađ Branković", *IČ* LVI, Beograd 2008, 50.

receiving the title of despot, Stefan began to call himself, like his father Lazar, an autocrat.[73] According to Constantine the Philosopher, during his lifetime, Sultan Bayezid I announced to Stefan a similar scenario according to which after his death his successors would fight for power, which would enable Stefan to become great and powerful, i.e. independent.[74] His submission to the Byzantine emperor was in practice only a fictitious obligation. With the defeat at Angora, Stefan was freed from "Ismaili slavery", but in order to preserve his state, he had to find a stronger ally than Byzantium. In the sphere of Ottoman opponents, the natural course of the despot Stefan directed him towards the neighboring Hungarians.

The Bosnian nobles tried to take advantage of the consequences of the Battle of Angora and the disintegration of the Ottoman state. Since an earlier attempt to search for the Bosnian noblemen, captured during the battle in Kosovo, did not bring positive results, the Bosnian nobles tried to take advantage of the confusion and free their family members.[75] In Bosnia during 1402, word spread that many Christians managed to take advantage of the situation and free themselves from Ottoman captivity. In March 1403, Prince Vukašin and Duke Vukmir Zlatonosović, Duke Hrvoje Vukčić and Duke Mirko Radojević addressed requests to the Ragusans. The petitions related to the search for the nobles Borovina Vukašinović, Mihoč Milošević, Vlad and Stjepan Zlatonosović and a certain Vuk.[76] The Ragusans replied to the Bosnian nobles that they would do everything in their power to help the Bosnian noblemen return to the state. In the responses of the Ragusan authorities to the Bosnian nobles, drawn up in mid-March 1403, a potential model for solving the situation can be seen. The framework of the Ragusan activities, in this matter, included the involvement of the Byz-

[73] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 200. Veselinović, *Država srpskih despota*, 41.

[74] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 268.

[75] (15. 2. 1390) Dinić, *Iz Dubrovačkog arhiva* III, 53. Ignacij Voje, "Sitni prilozi za istoriju srednjovjekovne Bosne", *GDI BiH* XVI, Sarajevo 1965, 277-278.

[76] (25. 3. 1403) DSA, Lettere di Levante IV, 8v. Pucić, *Spomenici srpski*, 46-48. For an overview of earlier literature, see: Srđan Rudić, "Borovinići-vlasteoska porodica iz istočne Bosne", in: *Zemlja Pavlovića-Srednji vijek i period turske vladavine*, ANURS, Banja Luka-Srpsko Sarajevo 2003, 259-278.

antine emperor Manuel II, who was supposed to stop by Ragusa in those days.[77] The Ragusans planned to send their subject Miloš Milišević with the Venetian galleys, which transported the emperor, with the mission of constantly reminding the emperor of the obligation to find the Bosnian nobles in Constantinople.[78] However, the Byzantine emperor did not visit Ragusa during his travels.[79] It seems that at the same time as the Bosnian requests, an inquiry from the Despotate arrived in Ragusa, concerning information regarding the return of Serbian nobles. In a letter addressed to Francesco II Gattilusio, the father-in-law of despot Stefan, in April 1403, the Ragusan authorities wrote that they had been asked by the Bosnian and Serbian lords to investigate the fate of two nobles who had escaped from Ottoman captivity. On that occasion, they sent their subject Franko Vicijanović, whom they recommend to Gattilusio, if he learns anything about the Serbian or Bosnian nobles, to inform him.[80] From the mission, Franko Vicijanović brought two letters to Ragusa that the Ragusans sent at the end of March 1404 to the Bosnian king Ostoja. Their content is unknown.[81] There is no more information available on the search for the Bosnian nobility, and their fate remains unknown.

[77] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 481-482. Pavle Dragičević, "Četiri pisma o ratnicima zarobljenim u kosovskoj bici", *GPB* 3, Banja Luka 2010, 99-102.

[78] Dragičević, "Četiri pisma", 108.

[79] Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 167-168. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 330-331. Bariša Krekić, *Dubrovnik i Levant (1280-1460)*, SAN, Beograd 1956, 27-28.

[80] Lett. di Lev. IV, 8v. Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 484-485. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 331. Dragičević, "Četiri pisma", 103.

[81] (30. 3. 1404) Lett. di Lev. IV, 63v-64. Pucić, *Spomenici srpski* I, Primedbe IV-VII. Voje, "Sitni prilozi", 279.

The diametrically opposed policies of the Hungarian king Sigismund

In April 1402, in the course of the Bosnian-Neapolitan campaign to conquer Dalmatian towns under Hungarian suzerainty, the Hungarian king Sigismund's envoys came to Ragusa with the aim of dissuading the towns from this initiative. On that occasion, the envoys received an oath of allegiance from the Ragusans to King Sigismund.[82] The Bosnian king Ostoja viewed this with distrust, considering this gesture a potential threat to his tribute from Ragusa. Despite the strained relations and war activities of the Bosnians against the Ragusan suzerain Sigismund, Bosnian-Ragusan relations did not change significantly until 1403. Ostoja's aspirations to take advantage of King Sigismund's weakening led him to incorporate into the Bosnian actions in Dalmatia the recognition of his authority in Ragusa. Bosnian nobility welcomed Ostoja's bold move in the initial phase, as they were waiting for a favorable moment to actualize their own interests. Ostoja found the reason for the attack on Ragusa in giving shelter to Pavle Radišić and Pavle Maštrović, after which he demanded that Ragusa recognize Bosnian rule and return the Primorje, which had been ceded a few years earlier. The attacks of Duke Radič's and King Ostoja's detachments from June and July 1403 on the Ragusan territory did not result in significant progress in the recognition of Bosnian authority by the Ragusans. At the same time, the Bosnian nobles, even those more enthusiastic about the attack, Sandalj Hranić and Radič Sanković, were more and more in favor of reconciliation. There was a period of peace in the relations between Bosnia and Ragusa prior to the winter of 1403, when the Ragusans attempted to transfer the arbitration to the Buda court. During October and November 1403, there were new political shifts in which King Ostoja aligned himself with

[82] Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja", 384.

King Sigismund, departing from the position at the beginning of the war defined by the agreement with King Ladislaus. With the same move, Ostoja distanced himself from the Bosnian nobility, who saw him as responsible for the failure in the war with Ragusa. Although during the spring of 1404 there was a reconciliation between King Ostoja and Herzog Hrvoje and an attempt to sign peace with Ragusa, differing views on resolving the conflict led to a new rift between the king and the nobility. In May 1404, the council made a decision to depose King Ostoja, and Tvrtko II Tvrtković, son of the first Bosnian king Tvrtko I Kotromanić, was appointed as the new Bosnian king.[83] The only thing left for the deposed Ostoja was to seek help from the Buda court.

Stefan Lazarević used the more peaceful period after the Battle of Angora to start establishing the state. However, the Ottoman interregnum did not represent the end of the danger for the Despotate. The frequent conflicts among Bayezid's sons constantly threatened the despot's possessions. Stefan's foreign policy activities aimed at strengthening his position towards the Ottomans began with the agreement made in Gallipoli in 1403. The agreement was concluded between the despot, the Venetians, Byzantium and the Duke of Naxos on the one hand, and the Ottomans on the other. In this agreement, Stefan was again envisaged as a vassal of Suleiman, but without the obligation of personally participating in the campaigns.[84] Looking for a firmer support in the direction of foreign policy and allies in the subsequent battles with the Ottomans, natural trends directed him towards King Sigismund. The negotiations between the Hungarian king and the despot took place in the period from 1403 to 1404. These lengthy negotiations, which did not pass without obstacles, were led by Filippo de

[83] Ćorović, *Historija*, 386. Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja", 410-411. Gavro Škrivanić, "Rat bosanskog kralja Ostoje sa Dubrovnikom", *Vesnik* 5/2, Beograd 1958, 35-60. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 199-204. Josip Lučić, "Stjecanje, dioba i borba za očuvanje Dubrovačkog primorja 1399-1405.", *AV* 11-12/1, Zagreb 1969, 99-201. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 20. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 115-122.

[84] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 14-15. John W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425): A study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey 1966, 224-226. Kalić, "Veliki preokret", 69. Kalić, "Despot Stefan i Vizantija", 32.

Scolaris.[85] According to the despot's biographer Constantine the Philosopher, after conquering and annexing the surrounding regions and those regions that had only long been called Serbian Sigismund sent envoys to Stefan with the aim of establishing friendship. On this mission, the despot "established friendship" with them. As, according to Constantine the Philosopher, Belgrade lay in Serbian territories, the despot requested it from Sigismund.[86] Despot Stefan came out of the negotiations with Sigismund strengthened by a powerful suzerain, and in addition to Belgrade, he also got Mačva to rule over. In this way, the Serbian despot entered the group of Hungarian vassals, he was obliged to participate in gatherings of the Hungarian nobility, as well as in various forms of court life in Buda.[87] With the annexation of Mačva, the Despotate also bordered the Bosnian Kingdom in the northern part from this time on. Sigismund wrote about the despot's vassalage in April 1404 to Duke Philip of Burgundy. Sigismund also emphasized how he made peace with the Bosnian king Ostoja, who was an important leverage in his fight against Hrvoje and King Ladislaus.[88] The purpose of Sigismund's actions was to establish a zone of loyal vassals to fend off Ottoman encroachment upon the southern Hungarian borders. In addition to the two men previously mentioned, Sigismund's ideas called for the inclusion of the Wallachian duke in this corps.[89] It seemed that the fate of Bosnia and the Despotate in Hungarian politics had already taken full shape at the beginning of the 15th century.

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[85] The final agreement was reached at the end of 1403 or the beginning of 1404. Stanoje Stanojević, *Pipo Spano-Prilog srpskoj istoriji početkom XV veka*, Beograd 1901, 8-9. Kalić, "Despot Stefan i Vizantija", 33. Kalić, "Veliki preokret", 70-71. Pál Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary*, 895-1526, I.B. Tauris, London-New York 2005, 232.

[86] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 284.

[87] Jovanka Kalić-Mijušković, *Beograd u srednjem veku*, SKA, Beograd 1967, 83-84. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 232.

[88] (16. 4. 1404) Ferdo Šišić, "Nekoliko isprava iz početka XV stoljeća", *Starine* JAZU XXXIX, Zagreb 1893, 240. Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja", 397.

[89] Šišić, "Nekoliko isprava", 240.

Upon the change of thrones in April 1404, the peace between King Ostoja and King Sigismund ended in December 1403. Sigismund began military operations against Bosnia following the enthronement of Tvrtko II by the nobility. Already in June, the Hungarian army crossed the Bosnian border and occupied Srebrenik, while the other part of the army, led by János Maróti, the Ban of Mačva, succeeded in placing the previously deposed king Ostoja in the court on Bobovac.[90] Srebrenik remained under Hungarian rule for several decades, while the wider area of Usora became the starting point for Hungarian military actions.[91] Since the summer of 1405, Bosnia had two kings: Ostoja, who was supported by Sigismund, and Tvrtko II, chosen by the Bosnian nobles. During the next few years, from 1404 to 1408, Bosnian territory became the scene of conflict between the Hungarian and Bosnian armies. King Tvrtko II and King Sigismund led two opposing camps. The efforts of the Ragusans to mediate for reconciliation in the spring of 1405 were in vain. Sigismund was preparing to deal with disobedient subjects, to restore and correct the borders of "our kingdom towards our kingdoms of Rama or Bosnia".[92] Considering the Bosnian state as an adequate territory that should become one of the elements within the system of protection of the southern Hungarian borders, Sigismund tried to make the Bosnian king and nobles vassals. With a defined goal, Sigismund embarked on a long-lasting struggle, and he turned Bosnia into an area of constant war activities.

With his foreign policy towards Bosnia and the Despotate in the period from 1403 to 1404, King Sigismund introduced an interesting concept in relations with his southern neighbors. Although King Sigismund, on his own initiative, received confirmation of vassalage from Despot Stefan

[90] Pavo Živković, "Sigismundova odmazda prema Horvatima i pokušaj pokoravanja bosanskog kraljevstva", *Radovi* 28 (15), Zadar 1989, 115-116.

[91] About the fate of Srebrenik, see: Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 130-131.

[92] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 124-125. More about the circumstances at that time: Marko Perojević, "Stjepan Tvrtko II. Tvrtković", in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 418. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 30. Pejo Ćošković, "Bosna na prijelomu stoljeća i potvrda državnih granica 1406.", *Prilozi* 31, Sarajevo 2002, 64-71.

through diplomatic means, and by ceding Belgrade and Mačva he provided both of them with firm support in the fight against the Ottomans, he did not achieve the same in Bosnia. During the initial disputes caused by the despot's brother Vuk, Stefan could count on the help of his suzerain. On the other hand, as the Bosnian example will show, Sigismund could also count on the despot's detachments to achieve his intentions. In this way, the Hungarian king became the creator of disparities in the relations between Bosnia and the Despotate, because the Despotate had a unique foreign policy position. While the Despotate, by signing alliance agreements with Byzantium and the Hungarians, created a long-lasting rampart around its borders, Bosnia not only remained isolated, but was additionally threatened by Hungarian pressure. As time passed, the agreements that the Bosnian magnates reached with Ladislaus of Naples on the Bosnian side became worthless, dried traces of ink on parchment. Sigismund's obsession to crown himself with the Bosnian crown, which the Bosnian nobles unanimously opposed, as if out of spite, led to great political oscillations in this part of Europe. These were two concepts of Hungarian foreign policy that would not change significantly until the end of Sigismund's life. It was about balancing personal and state interests, where on the historical scale personal ambition, in Sigismund's case, weighed more. In this constellation of relations, the Despotate, as a Hungarian vassal country, entered the opposing camp against Bosnia.

The Hungarian king's preparations for new campaigns on Bosnian territory from the spring of 1405 left their mark on the regional level as well. Word of the military preparations reached the Balšić family in Zeta who inquired with the Ragusans, to which in early May the Ragusans replied to Jelena and her son Balša III (1403–1427) that Sigismund was preparing a large army, and for more detailed information they referred them to the despot who is in a close relationship with him.[93] From the short answer, it is recognized how well known and followed the relationship between

[93] (2. 5. 1405) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 385-386. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 124.

Belgrade and Buda was in the neighborhood. Despot Stefan's separation from the Ottomans at this time is evidenced by his statement to the Venetians from May 1406. That statement states that he is no longer an Ottoman vassal and that he is ready to fight against them.[94] In March 1405, in Ragusa, they had information about the contacts of Duke Sandalj and Despot Stefan. From the instruction of the Ragusan authorities sent to its envoy Nicola Goze who was with Sandalj Hranić, we draw the information that the duke was visited by the envoy of Despot Stefan, and accordingly the Ragusans gave an order to find out the reason for his visit.[95] The later responses to Goze do not mention the reasons for the visit of the despot's envoy. At the time when the Bosnian magnates were preparing for Sigismund's attack, his vassal, who in those days was said to be on good terms with him, decided to send his envoy to Sandalj's court. In those days, the despot was considered a person from whom, according to the Ragusans, information about Sigismund's army could be obtained. The visit of the despot's envoy to Sandalj would certainly fit more into the Zeta issue, in which Sandalj, the Venetians, the despot and the despot's cousin Balša formed a quadrilateral. In any case, Sigismund's military activities against Bosnia, which began in September 1405, did not last long.[96] Already in November of the same year, Sandalj signaled to the Ragusans that they had no need to prevent merchants from leaving Ragusa.[97]

In the period from 1405 to 1408, King Sigismund led several powerful attacks on Bosnian territory with the aim of subduing the ruler, conquering the state and taking the Bosnian crown. Nevertheless, all these attacks did not fulfill the basic goals of the Hungarian king.[98] A particularly heavy attack in the autumn of 1408 resulted in the execution of a large number of

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[94] (18. 5. 1406) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 76-77. Ivica Prlender, "Ugarsko-srpski odnosi za despota Stefana (1402-1427)", magistarski rad, Filozofski fakultet, Zagreb 1990, 108.

[95] (18. 3. 1405) Lett. di Lev. IV, 85v.

[96] Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 194. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 126.

[97] (November 1405) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 269. Ćorović, *Historija*, 394. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 51.

[98] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 130-137.

Bosnian nobles near Dobor.[99] However, even this venture did not significantly help in the realization of Hungarian ambitions. Significant signs of change came from Naples, and that was due to the attitude of King Ladislaus, who from July 1408 led negotiations with the Venetians regarding the sale of Dalmatia, which directly threatened the Bosnian nobles, especially Hrvoje. Therefore, at the end of 1408, the Herzog of Split replaced the Neapolitan uniform with a Hungarian one, after which Sigismund acknowledged him as the Herzog of Split and his possessions in Bosnia.[100] Other nobles did not follow his example, Duke Sandalj was still known as a supporter of the Neapolitan side in 1409.[101] King Tvrtko II was on the Bosnian throne until the fall of 1409, probably with Hrvoje's support, and with an orientation towards Sigismund.[102] In the winter of 1409, Ostoja managed to secure the throne for himself and completely marginalize Tvrtko II. The exact location where the deposed king Tvrtko II stayed immediately after stepping down from power is unknown.[103]

Due to the lack of sources, it is difficult to determine what role Sigismund's vassal, Despot Stefan Lazarević played in the initial actions against Bosnia. Although the written traces place his role in the Bosnian-Hungarian conflicts in a later phase, the fact that the Hungarian military was focused on the penetration from Usora, in the immediate neighborhood of the Despotate, leaves the possibility of his more active participation in earlier campaigns as well. Ultimately, he was obligated to do so by the agreement from 1403/1404. Bosnian troops attacked Hungarian territories from Usora in 1407, with the Ottomans' assistance, plundering, destroying and capturing

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99 Šišić believes that the battle took place much further south of Dobor. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 280. Compare: Ćorović, *Historija*, 399-401. Perojević, "Stjepan Tvrtko II. Tvrtković", 424-427. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 210. Živković, "Sigismundova odmazda prema Horvatima", 121-122. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 233. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 137-142.

100 Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 204. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 210-211. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 234.

101 Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 176.

102 Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 173-174.

103 Ćorović, *Historija*, 400. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 62-63.

local residents.[104] There is no recorded document by which Sigismund thanked the despot Stefan for his participation in the defense against the Bosnian attacks from Usora, but Sigismund's generous gifts to the Serbian despot suggest his extensive contributions at the Buda court. At this very time, Despot Stefan was concerned about arming his soldiers. At the end of April 1407, at his request, he was allowed to import weapons from Ragusa.[105] At the time of Sigismund's preparations for the war against the Bosnians in 1408, one trace remained of his potential conversation with the despot about current events. At the beginning of March, the Ragusans instructed Andrea Volzo, the envoy to the Hungarian king, that if the king decided to go to Romania via Serbia to meet the despot, that the envoy should accompany him.[106] From the letters dated immediately after this instruction, there is no glimpse of the outcome of Sigismund's trip, so the meeting with the despot this time most likely never happened. This information also points to the fact that King Sigismund regularly counted on Despot Stefan.

During the frequent Hungarian attacks against the Kingdom of Bosnia, it is possible, with some information, to expand the margins of knowledge of the completely opposite Hungarian foreign policy towards the southern neighbors. While Sigismund postponed the hearing of a certain Ladislaus Tőttös because of his mission in the Despotate,[107] other hearings were postponed because of his participation in *expedicionem contra Turcos et Boznenses,*[108] *in regio exercitu nostro Boznensi*.[109] Sigismund's policy towards Bosnia and the Despotate in this period can be illustrated by the example of Ladislaus. Two years before his appointment as Sigismund's trustee in the

[104] (10. 12. 1407) Fejer, *Codex diplomaticvs* X/4, 610-611.

[105] "de dando licenciam ser Matheo de Gradi quod possit emere de armis in ciuitate nostra Ragusii pro domino dispotto Sclauonie et illa extrahere de Ragusii" (22. 4. 1407) Ref. XXXIII, 217v.

[106] (2. 3. 1408) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 178. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 137.

[107] Tőttös was appointed as Sigismund's envoy for the Despotate at the beginning of April 1406. The departure took place a month later, when his hearing was postponed by Palatine Nicholas Garai. (13. 5. 1406) Šišić, "Nekoliko isprava", 264, 270-271.

[108] (2. 6. 1407) Šišić, "Nekoliko isprava", 287-288.

[109] (9. 6. 1406) Šišić, "Nekoliko isprava", 274.

Despotate by a charter from June 1404, the Hungarian king wrote to János Maróti, Ban of Mačva, that Tőttös was going with him to the Bosnian war.[110] In the later battles of 1408, Ladislaus managed to fill a few more pages of his "war book" in the wars with the Bosnian Kingdom.[111]

During the years of Bosnian-Hungarian conflicts, until the change of the Bosnian throne in 1409, relations between Hungary and the Despotate moved on an upward trajectory. As a result of a firm alliance with the new suzerain and a more peaceful environment due to the Ottoman interregnum in the south, Despot Stefan began the internal profiling of his state. Continuing the tradition of the Nemanjićs, Stefan took care of the monasteries. Several of his donations to monasteries during this period have been preserved.[112] Despot Stefan attempted to improve the economy of his country by tying it more closely to the Adriatic economic centers of Ragusa and Venice. While Stefan issued the first official charter on freedom of trade to the Ragusans in November 1405, it is known that the economic relations between the two parties existed independently of the change in 1402. Despite the fact that the disunited Ottoman Empire was not a significant and powerful force in the first decade of the 15th century, they still penetrated the Despotate, as evidenced by the Ragusans' complaint in April 1405 that the Ottomans had looted goods.[113] There is a limited amount of information available about Despot Stefan over the next few years, which makes it difficult to reconstruct his political activities. As evidenced by the preserved data from the Ragusan councils, Despot Stefan maintained a stable relationship with the Ragusans during the following years.[114]

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[110] (6. 6. 1404) Šišić, "Nekoliko isprava", 243.

[111] (2. 6. 1408) (12. 11. 1408) Šišić, "Nekoliko isprava", 308, 309-310.

[112] Stojan Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici srpskih država srednjega veka*, SKA, Beograd 1912, 497-499, 752-753. Miklosich, *Monumenta*, 331-333.

[113] (27. 4. 1405) Lett. di Lev. IV, 91v-92.

[114] (6. 10. 1408) Ref. XXXIII, 239. "quod dominus dispot emere facere possit XL balistas et eas extrahere Ragusio" (10. 2. 1408) Ibid., 44v. "de respondendo ambasiatoribus domini despotti ituris Venetiarum quod cum venerint Ragusium inuouent brigantinum nostrum param nostris expensis" (3. 1. 1408) Ibid., 71v. Ibid., 147, 164, 276.

Reconciliation between long-time opponents Hrvoje and Sigismund was arranged at the end of 1408, and at the beginning of January 1409, Sigismund informed the people of Trogir about the concluded peace. As the most prominent Bosnian nobleman, he joined the ranks of the Hungarian nobility, and his possessions in Bosnia were confirmed. He retained the title of Herzog of Split and received the possession of the Požega county and the royal possession of Segesd.[115] At the time of his appointment to the Order of the Dragon, which included the names of twenty-two of Sigismund's most loyal noblemen, the Serbian despot Stefan was also present at the Buda court.[116] Alongside Stefan Lazarević, Herzog Hrvoje also joined the Dragon Order and became the godfather of the Hungarian king.[117] Sigismund's future plans towards the vassals Hrvoje and Stefan were contradictory.

After the war, wars again

Sigismund's victory in Bosnia in 1408 resulted in the reorganization of Bosnian magnates. There were two opposing camps, one headed by Sigismund's vassal Hrvoje and the other by Sandalj. Sandalj remained loyal to Ladislaus of Naples. In the middle of that whirlwind, King Ostoja resurfaced, supported by Sandalj, who was seen as a key figure in ensuring that the Bosnian crown remained in the hands of the Bosnians.[118] Recognizing that the actions of the Bosnian nobility could jeopardize his claim to the Bosnian crown, Sigismund announced his intention to come to Bosnia for his coronation before departing for the Despotate in May 1409.[119] However, his true intentions regarding the Bosnian crown in mid-1409 remain unclear due to the lack of sources. Nevertheless, he did not proceed with the

[115] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 211. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 144-145.

[116] (1408) Fejer, *Codex diplomaticvs* X/4, 687-693. In more detail, see: Miloš Antonović, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i Zmajev red", *IG* 1-2 (1990-1992), Beograd 1992, 17-18. Živojin Andrejić, *Vitezovi reda zmaja*, Prometna agencija "Miroslav", Beograd 1999, 87. Andrej Štekar, "Viteško odlikovanje zmajevega reda", *NV* XXVII/29, Ljubljana 2001, 768.

[117] Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 206

[118] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 212. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 180.

[119] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 214. Živković, "Sigismundova odmazda", 124.

coronation. In response to the changing circumstances, the Bosnian nobles Sandalj and Hrvoje began arming themselves at the Ragusans' in June 1409.[120] In order to strengthen the position of his vassal in Bosnia, Sigismund proclaimed Hrvoje viceroy at the beginning of 1410.[121] The following events indicate that there was some kind of agreement between Sigismund and Hrvoje concerning their future activities, even before the latter was appointed viceroy. In March 1410, there was an attack by the Hungarian army from Vranduk on Podvisoki, where King Ostoja was located, who on this occasion managed to escape from the attackers.[122] Over the following month, Hrvoje engaged in a campaign with Split authorities regarding the confiscation of Ostoja's property. In accordance with these events, in May 1410, Hrvoje handed Sigismund his towns and forts in eastern Bosnia: Srebrenica, Kučlat, Susjed and Brodar, and as a natural extension of his previous efforts, after the usual preparations for a military campaign in June and July, Sigismund arrived in Bosnia in the fall of the same year.[123]

Sigismund's stay in Bosnia was already certain by mid-September 1410. A two-member delegation from Ragusa was sent to King Sigismund in Bosnia, which consisted of Rafael Goze and Michael Resti. According to Ragusa's well-informed citizens, their envoys would find Viceroy Hrvoje and Despot Stefan in Bosnia with the Hungarian king, and they also sent special letters to both. In a brief note given to the envoys who were supposed to speak with the despot, it appears that on this occasion they tried to solve the usual trade problems of their subjects in the Despotate.[124] The despot's

[120] (15. 6. 1409) (25. 6. 1409) Ref. XXXIII, 250, 250v.

[121] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 214. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 148.

[122] (16. 3. 1410) Lett. di Lev. V, 6v-8v.

[123] Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 195. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 221. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 65-66. Jelena Mrgić, "Župe i naselja zemlje Usore", *JIČ* XXXIII/1-2, Beograd 2000, 40. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 149-152. Jelena Mrgić, *Severna Bosna 13.-16. vek*, Istorijski institut, Beograd 2008, 102-104.

[124] "de portando ad consilium maius quod ambasciatores ellecti ad viagium Bossine possint ire etiam ambasciatores ad dominum nostrum Regem" (13. 9. 1410) Ref. XXXIII, 282. (24. 9. 1410) Lett. di Lev. V, 42v. Jovanka Kalić, "Nemirno doba", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 82-83. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 24. Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*, 75. Dedić, "Relations Between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate", 55.

arrival on the Bosnian Kingdom territory meant the faithful service of Stefan as a vassal. In October, Sigismund stayed in the eastern part of Bosnia, where he had been granted possessions by Hrvoje a few months earlier. During this time, the Ragusans mentioned the coronation ceremony of the new Bosnian king Sigismund, which testifies that his coronation was expected.[125] According to the archival sources, it is difficult to determine whether the despot's stay in Bosnia was also accompanied by the arrival of his army or only his entourage. Considering the defeat of his army in June of that year in the Battle of Kosmidion and the constant Ottoman incursions, it is questionable how many soldiers the despot could effectively provide to Sigismund.[126] There is, however, a great deal of ambiguity surrounding the details of Sigismund's last campaign. In addition to the military units that Sigismund had stationed in Bosnia earlier, the Ragusans report that on the last day of May 1410, his armies entered Srebrenica and other nearby towns.[127] There is no information regarding significant military conflicts during Sigismund's campaign. At the end of October, the situation was seemingly crystal clear: the Bosnian magnates were expected to submit to Sigismund, and give their consent to his coronation as King of Bosnia.[128] However, once again, Sigismund did not succeed in his intentions.

After another failed attempt to be crowned with the Bosnian crown, in the face of increasingly serious Ottoman interference in the situation in the Despotate, Sigismund turned to further strengthening relations with Despot Stefan. Frederick VI, Burgrave of Nuremberg, reported to Nuremberg at the beginning of July 1411 that negotiations were underway regarding the transfer of all areas and provinces of the Serbian despot to the Hungarian

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[125] "de donando domino nostro et domine regine in suam coronationem Regni Bossine" (20. 10. 1410) Ref. XXXIII, 284. (21. 10. 1410) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium,* 198. Marko Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja (opet)" in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 434. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 152.

[126] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 342. Kalić, "Nemirno doba", 82-83.

[127] (30. 5. 1410) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 195.

[128] (21. 10. 1410) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 198. Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja (opet)", 434. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 152. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 221. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 65-66.

crown, and that an agreement had been reached between the two parties.[129] A few days later, Burgrave Frederick wrote again that, in addition to the Serbian lords, the Bosnian nobility also consented to the agreement with Sigismund.[130] On the same day, a certain knight, Janos Romlian Coberni, reported to Frankfurt from Buda that the Serbian despot had placed himself under the supreme authority of King Sigismund. Right then, the despot was at the court in Buda, but according to Janos, he was supposed to return to the Despotate in a few days.[131] To demonstrate his loyalty, despot Stefan "purchased" from Sigismund Nagybánya, a famous Hungarian silver and gold mine, as well as Szatmár and Németi.[132] These examples provide clear indications of Sigismund's policy towards Bosnia and the Despotate. In addition to the allocation of rich mining areas in Hungary, Sigismund also gave Despot Stefan the rich area of Srebrenica and its surroundings, creating a stumbling block between these two states until the end of their existence.

Bosnian magnates, who had opposed the recognition of Hungarian supremacy after 1410, changed their attitudes significantly in the spring of 1411. Ragusans reported to Sigismund at the end of May 1411 that Bosnian magnates were willing to reconcile with him and make concessions.[133] An additional piece of evidence that points to a change in the relationship between Bosnia and Hungary is a letter from Ragusa to Duke Sandalj written in mid-October, in which they express their delight at the agreement reached

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129 (3. 7. 1411) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 52. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 167. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 213.

130 (10. 7. 1411) Karl Adolf Konstantin von Hofler, *Geschichtschreiber der husitischen Bewegung in Böhmen*, VIII, Herausgegeben von der historischen commission der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Wien 1865, 473-474.

131 (10. 7. 1411) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 52. Jovan Radonić, "Sporazum u Tati 1426 i srpsko-ugarski odnosi od XIII-XVI veka", *Glas* SKA CLXXXVII, Beograd 1941, 150.

132 (15. 7. 1411) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 52-53. Purković, *Knez i despot Stefan Lazarević*, 75. Aleksandar Krstić, "Dva neobjavljena latinska pisma despota Stefana Lazarevića", *Inicijal* 3, Beograd 2015, 198.

133 (25. 5. 1411) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 201. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 223. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 166-167. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 184.

between Bosnia and Hungary.[134] Two months later, in mid-December, Sandalj married Jelena Balšić, sister of Despot Stefan and widow of Đurađ II Stracimirović Balšić.[135] Sandalj's marriage to Jelena had a significant impact on his foreign policy, which touched and fused with the policies of Despot Stefan in certain segments. Due to the fact that the information about Sandalj's wedding comes from the beginning of December, when Bosnia was reconciled with Hungary, it is difficult to determine the role of Despot Stefan in Sandalj's reorientation from the middle of 1411. In July 1411 in Buda, Sandalj and Stefan could have had common contacts and even negotiations concerning the wedding, but this construction is not supported by the sources. The quality of the relationship between the Bosnian duke and the Serbian despot after Sandalj's marriage is also evidenced by Stefan's charter to the Mileševa Monastery, which dates back to around 1413.[136]

Noblemen from Bosnia and the Despotate at the Buda court in 1412

In honor of the reconciliation with the Polish king Władysław Jagiełło II (1386–1434), which took place in March 1412, King Sigismund organized a knight's tournament in May of that year at his court in Buda, where the most important feudal elite of Europe at the time gathered. Along with the Polish, Hungarian and German nobles, the Bosnian magnates, King Ostoja, Herzog Hrvoje, Duke Sandalj and Prince Pavle Radinović and Serbian Despot Stefan found their place at this extraordinary gathering, accompanied by their wives.[137] As described by contemporaries, Herzog Hrvoje stood

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[134] (13. 10. 1411) Lett. di Lev. VII, 20. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 223. Radonić, "O knezu Pavlu Radenoviću", 55. Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja (opet)", 435-436. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 167.

[135] (15. 12. 1411) Lett. di Lev. VII, 28-28v. Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 114. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 45, 187. Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 234-236. The wedding of Sandalj and Jelena was recorded in the Serbian chronicle. Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 50.

[136] Blagojević, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i Mileševa", 173-174. Đorđe Trifunović, *Despot Stefan Lazarević-Književni radovi*, SKZ, Beograd 1977, 150-151.

[137] Emir Filipović, "Viteške svečanosti u Budimu 1412. godine i učešće bosanskih predstavnika", in: *Spomenica akademika Marka Šunjića (1927-1998)*, Filozofski fakultet, Sarajevo 2010, 297. Balász

out among Bosnian noblemen. In knight games, his knights were noted for their height and robust stature and for outperforming their opponents. It is known that Hrvoje invested funds in his trips to the Buda court and borrowed money from his wife in order to demonstrate his chivalrous spirit as much as possible.[138] On the other hand, the despot's biographer Constantine the Philosopher noted that in Buda Stefan "was the brightest among all, like the moon among the stars." Then, according to Constantine's writings, he received numerous gifts from the Hungarians, including fortified towns and villages. The Hungarian king presented various donations to the despot during subsequent visits to Buda.[139]

At the time of the knight's tournament in Buda, half a year after Sandalj's marriage to Jelena Lazarević, Sandalj's relations with the despot Stefan were already on a solid foundation. According to instructions issued by the Ragusan authorities to their envoys Nicola Goze and Matheo Gradi, who were heading to the Buda court, they were advised not to discuss any event or agreement reached between Sandalj and Stefan with them.[140] There is not enough information available to determine exactly what this case involved. Considering the Ragusans' activities from the following period, a possible agreement, which they did not wish to discuss, could have involved a joint campaign against Prince Musa, who had been putting increasing pressure on the Despotate since January 1412.[141] Sandalj's stay at Sigismund's court

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Nagy, "Ceremony and Diplomacy: The Royal Summit in Buda in 1412", in: *The Jagiellonians in Europe: Dynastic Diplomacy and Foreign Relations*, ed. Attila Bárány, Balász Antal Bacsa, Forschungsgruppe "Ungarn in mittelalterlichen Europa", Universität Debrecen-Ungarische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Debrecen 2016, 15.

138 Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja (opet)", 437. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 169. Filipović, "Viteške svečanosti", 300-301.

139 Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 311-312.

140 "Perche Sandali e facta una cosa cum lo despotto et lo despotto cum lui, de questo facto non parlati niente cum li dicti despoto e Sandali" (13. 5. 1412) Lett. di Lev. VII, 43. Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 206. Ćorović, *Historija*, 409. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 189.

141 Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 225. Jireček, *Istorija Bosne*, I, 344. Mihailo Dinić, "Novo Brdo", *Starinar* 5-6/1954-1955, Beograd 1955, 248. Nedim Filipović, *Princ Musa i šejh Bedreddin*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo 1971, 450-451.

a month before the knight's tournament in April 1412 should be included in the common framework with these data. At that time, Sandalj had to explain his actions to the Venetians, who viewed his departure to Buda as a threat to their interests.[142]

[142] (22. 4. 1412) Ljubić, *Listine* VI, 252-253. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 170. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 189

Actions regarding the Ottoman Interregnum (1408-1413)

With the resolution of the Bosnian-Hungarian conflict at the end of 1408, an uprising broke out in the Despotate by Stefan's brother Vuk Lazarević, who wanted to take over power in the state. He couldn't find support for his ambitions among his Christian neighbors, so he formed an alliance with Suleiman, the son of Sultan Bayezid I. Stefan's relatives, the Brankovićs, also joined this alliance, apparently dissatisfied with their status after the Battle of Angora. Conflicts arose at the beginning of 1409. As a result, Stefan turned to Sigismund for assistance, who sent Filippo de Scolaris with his detachments to the Despotate in January.[143] Ragusans received information about fierce battles fought in Kosovo and around Pristina towards the end of February. There were further conflicts in the summer of the same year, when a part of Stefan's nobility sided with Vuk. This time, Stefan was personally helped by Sigismund, who, accompanied by János Maróti, went to the Despotate at the beginning of May.[144] Vuk and his allies appeared to have more success since the despot retreated to Belgrade, from where negotiations began, leading to Vuk being given control of a portion of the Despotate.[145]

The arrival of new Ottoman influences in the European part of the Ottoman Empire resulted in the destabilization of temporary starting points. Through a series of successful campaigns, Prince Musa, one of the pretenders to the Ottoman throne, occupied the area between Edirne and Gallipoli and invited Despot Stefan, Vuk Lazarević and the Brankovićs to join him. His efforts were successful in this regard.[146] While the context in which Musa's

[143] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 19-20. Prlender, "Ugarsko-srpski odnosi za despota Stefana", 84.

[144] Prlender, "Ugarsko-srpski odnosi za despota Stefana", 84. Purković, *Knez i despot Stefan Lazarević*, 89-90.

[145] Stojan Novaković, *Srbi i Turci XIV i XV veka*, Beograd 1893, 330. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 342. Kalić, "Nemirno doba", 81.

[146] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 342.

promises to the Lazarević and Branković families were made is not clearly known, it can be assumed that each was motivated by ambition for power. During the middle of June 1410, there was a battle between the Ottoman pretenders, Musa and Suleiman, near the fortress of Kosmidion on the Golden Horn. Musa and his allies were defeated in that battle.[147] The devious Vuk Lazarević and the Brankovićs changed sides just before the battle and fled to Suleiman.[148]

The return of Lazarević and Branković from Constantinople after the battle followed a similar pattern as in 1402. Vuk Lazarević and Lazar Branković, under the orders of Suleiman, rushed to the Despotate to take over power from Despot Stefan. In July 1410, on their way, they were intercepted near Plovdiv by one of Musa's commanders, who captured and subsequently executed them.[149] With Vuk's death, the internal unrest in the Despotate came to an end. A new set of complications developed between the despot and the Ottomans following the assassination of Suleiman in February 1411.[150] Stefan attempted to take advantage of his death to fulfill the terms of the agreement he had concluded with Musa two years earlier. However, the situation did not unfold as expected. Despot's envoys barely escaped captivity at Musa's, prompting Stefan to launch military campaigns to the Pirot region.[151] Despot Stefan became the focal point around which Musa's opponents gathered from this point forward. It was in July 1411 that Despot Stefan again stayed at the Buda court, where he reached an agreement with Sigismund in order to ensure a more secure hinterland for his future fight against the Ottomans. Some Ottoman officials who disagreed with Musa

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147 Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 342. Kalić, "Nemirno doba", 82-83.

148 Filipović, *Princ Musa*, 328-333. The despot Stefan took advantage of his stay near the Byzantine capital and on this occasion he visited the Byzantine emperor Manuel II, who confirmed the title of despot obtained in 1402 from his co-ruler John VII. Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 296. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 342. Ferjančić, "Despoti", 184.

149 Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 297–298. Radonić, "Sporazum u Tati", 154.

150 Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 344. Filipović, *Princ Musa*, 339.

151 Filipović, *Princ Musa*, 442-443. Kalić, "Nemirno doba", 84.

also switched to the despot's side.[152] Which further strengthened the despot's position. In October 1412, after initially siding with Prince Musa following Suleiman's death, Stefan reconciled with his cousin Đurađ Branković through the mediation of his mother, Mara.[153] It was a significant moment in Stefan's reign considering he had no male heir at that time. The conflict with Prince Musa in the Despotate occurred again at the beginning of the following year in 1412 in the vicinity of Vranje and Novo Brdo. Due to a lack of military strength, Despot Stefan avoided open battles. In 1412, Musa held the despot's towns of Sokolac, Bolvan, Lipovac and Stalać in his hands.[154]

After the summer of 1412, an alliance emerged involving Sandalj, Stefan, and Sigismund. It was a combination that favored Despot Stefan in light of his conflict with Prince Musa. Having not been adequately prepared to deal with the Ottoman prince on his own, Stefan, either on his own initiative or at the instigation of Sigismund, also won over Sandalj for the purpose of defending his state. Based on the sources, it is not possible to reconstruct the date on which the despot and Sandalj reached their agreement. Some have speculated that this could have occurred during the Buda gathering of May 1412,[155] but it should be emphasized that the action took place more than a year later. The Ragusans informed Sandalj in mid-November 1412 that their envoy was permitted to take and export weapons and other supplies as needed.[156] There are some claims regarding the incursion of the Ottomans from the Despotate into the eastern border areas of Bosnia at the end of 1412 and the beginning of 1413 that have not been supported by sources.[157]

[152] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 303. Purković, *Knez i despot Stefan Lazarević*, 99

[153] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 303-304. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 344. Kalić, "Nemirno doba", 86-87. Spremić, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i gospodin Đurađ Branković", 53.

[154] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 344. Dinić, "Novo Brdo", 248. Filipović, *Princ Musa*, 450-451, 456. Kalić, "Nemirno doba", 86.

[155] Jovanka Kalić, "Snaženje Despotovine", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 89.

[156] (11. 11. 1412) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 285-286. Pucić, *Spomenici srpski* I, 114.

[157] According to Bogumil Hrabak's interpretations, at the end of 1412 and the beginning of 1413, Sultan Musa's troops marched against Despot Stefan and on that occasion invaded eastern Bosnia, where they plundered the hereditary possessions of the Pavlović family. The author refers to editions of

There is some uncertainty regarding the action taken by the Ragusans in November 1412 when they sent envoys to King Sigismund, whose whereabouts they were not sure of. This mission, sent for tribute, was expected to make its way through the Drina route to the territory of the Zlatonosović nobles, and inquire about the location of the Hungarian king there.[158] The conditions in those parts of Bosnia may have been unstable at the beginning of 1413. At the request of Vukmir Zlatonosović to provide him with one physician for two months on the first day of February 1413, the Ragusans responded positively. However, *phisicus Bartholus de Squarcialupi* was not persuaded to go on that journey, probably due to unstable conditions.[159]

In March 1413, the incursion of Prince Musa's army on the eastern border of the Despotate resulted in the displacement of a large number of people.[160] According to the report of Ragusan envoys Gradi and Gondola from the beginning of March, the despot's towns of Lipovac, Bolvan, Podstalać, Braničevo, Borač and Toplica came under attack.[161] The mention of Borač in Despotate, as one of the places where the Ottomans penetrated, in the literature unjustifiably led to its association with Borač in Bosnia, in the territory of Pavle Radinović.[162] Based on Musa's movement, which entered the

sources that do not contain this information. Bogumil Hrabak, "Otimačina i hajdučija hercegovačke vlastele u XIV i XV veku", in: *Zemlja Pavlovića-Srednji vijek i period turske vladavine*, 287.

[158] (9. 11. 1412) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 210-211.

[159] (1. 2. 1413) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 483. Risto Jeremić-Jorjo Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture starog Dubrovnik*, vol. II, Beograd 1939, 25. Risto Jeremić-Jorjo Tadić, *Prilozi za istoriju zdravstvene kulture staroga Dubrovnika*, vol. III, Beograd 1940, 137. Pavo Živković, "Usorska vlasteoska porodica Zlatonosovići i bosanski kraljevi (posljednja decenija XIV i prve tri decenije XV stoljeća)", *HZ* XXXIX (1), Zagreb 1986, 151.

[160] Siniša Mišić, "Pohod sultana Muse na Despotovinu 1413. godine i istočno srpsko-turska granica", *IG* 1-2, Beograd 1987, 76.

[161] (8. 3. 1413) Lett. di Lev. VII, 85. Filipović, *Princ Musa*, 456.

[162] (8. 3. 1413) Lett. di Lev. VII, 85. Radonić, "O knezu Pavlu Radenoviću", 56. D. Maliković and E. Kurtović followed Radonić, accepting the thesis that it is the Bosnian Borač. Dragi Maliković, "Pavlovići i Turci", in: *Zemlja Pavlovića-Srednji vijek i period turske vladavine*, 173. Esad Kurtović, "Sudbina Pavlovića u odnosima Bosne i Dubrovnika", in: *Pad bosanskog kraljevstva 1463. godine*, Istorijski institut Beograd-Sarajevo-Banja Luka 2015, 12. It is quite certain that the first mistake was made by Iorga, who identified Borač as the place of Pavle Radinović. Iorga, *Notes* II, 140.

Despotate on the eastern borders, a deep incursion on the Bosnian border is unlikely. Musa provoked an entire coalition against him with his incursion. Most likely in May 1413, the despot's and Sandalj's army met in Kruševac with the detachments of János Maróti, sent by King Sigismund, and with the detachments of Musa's brother Mehmed, who arrived from the Asian part of the Ottoman Empire thanks to Byzantine ships. The first information about Sandalj's involvement with Despot Stefan in the war against the Ottomans dates back to mid-June.[163] According to the Ragusans and Stefan's biographer Constantine, the allies moved south all the way to Novo Brdo, from where the despot, Sandalj and Maróti went back, while Mehmed and Đurađ Branković, who joined the allies along the way, moved with the entire army through Ovče Polje looking for Musa.[164] The despot's biographer reports how the army under Mehmed and Đurađ moved towards Iskar under Mount Vitosha near the village of Çamurlu. Musa was captured and killed during a decisive battle in which the allies prevailed.[165] The despot's biographer Constantine also talks about the persecution of Musa's supporters at the hands of the despot's army, which should be understood as the army of Hungarian allies.[166] In

[163] "fidelis nostri magnifici Zandalii wayvode nunc hiis proximis temporibus, quibus idem Zandalius una cum iluustri principe Dezpoto ac aliis regnorum nostrorum Hungarie et Bozne baronibus et nobilibus contra insultus et invasiones dictorum infidelium Turcorum et aliarum barbaricaum nacionum fuit constitutus" (17. 6. 1413) Ljubić, *Listine* VII, 123-124. Jovan Radonić, *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* I/1, SKA, Beograd 1934, 221-222. Jovan Radonić, "Der Grossvojvode von Bosnien Sandalj Hranić-Kosača", *Archiv für slawische Philologie* XIX, Berlin 1897, 164. Filipović, *Princ Musa*, 461. Kalić, "Snaženje Despotovine", 88.

[164] (14. 7. 1413) Lett. di Lev. VII, 75v. Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 224-225. Sima Ćirković, "Dve godine bosanske istorije (1414 i 1415)", *IG* 3-4, Beograd 1953, 30. Filipović, *Princ Musa*, 470. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 198, 432. Maja Nikolić, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i turske međusobice 1411-1413. godine", in: *Moravska Srbija. Istorija-kultura-umetnost*, Istorijski arhiv Kruševac-Odeljenje za istoriju Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu, Kruševac 2007, 169. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 219.

[165] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 307-310. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 344-345. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 26-27. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 29. Kalić, "Snaženje Despotovine", 89. Purković, *Knez i despot Stefan Lazarević*, 105-106. Nikolić, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i turske međusobice", 169. Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 307-310. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 344-345. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 26-27. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 29. Kalić, "Snaženje Despotovine", 89. Purković, *Knez i despot Stefan Lazarević*, 105-106. Nikolić, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i turske međusobice", 169.

[166] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 310. Filipović, *Princ Musa*, 509.

mid-July, the Ragusans received information about Musa's defeat and death from Sandalj's envoy.[167] The Ragusans forwarded this information to Sigismund at the end of July.[168] Mavro Orbini inaccurately reported the involvement of Bosnian forces along with the Serbian despot in the war against Prince Musa. According to his story, the war began in 1415, and Sandalj and Petar participated on the Bosnian side.[169]

Serbian chronicles also provide sparse and fragmentary information regarding the despot's fight against the Ottomans in 1413. Nonetheless, the Bosnian duke Sandalj did not find a place in them as a comrade-in-arms of his brother-in-law Stefan.[170] Ragusans wrote about Sandalj's engagement in the Despotate against the Ottomans a year after these events took place. In May 1414, they flattered Sandalj by informing King Sigismund that his nobility had behaved bravely and nobly towards the Despot and the Turkish Emperor.[171] Despot Stefan was rewarded by Mehmed for their joint efforts against Musa. Following his accession to the Ottoman throne in 1413, he granted him Koprijan, as well as part of Znepole near Trn and the area in the mountains between Niš and Sofia.[172] It is not known whether the other participants, primarily Sandalj and Maróti, who were not directly threatened by Musa's incursions, benefited from certain concessions made by Sultan Mehmed. When the dust settled on the battlefield under Mount Vitosha, the new Sultan Mehmed I (1413–1421) with the centralized power of the Ottoman state and Despot Stefan, who once again had power over the entire Despotate, emerged as absolute winners in past events. Meanwhile, with Sandalj's departure to the Despotate, Bosnian politics underwent some changes.

[167] "de donando nuncio Sandalis qui apportauit literas nouorum mortis Mussie Teucri usque ad valorem yperperum viginti de denaris nostri comunis" (17. 7. 1413) Ref. XXXIV, 82.

[168] Lett. di Lev. VII, 76v. Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 225-226. Radonić, *Akta i povelje* I/1, 225-226.

[169] Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 107, 179.

[170] Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 223-224.

[171] "**за ваш8 велик8 вѣр8 и сл8жьб8 почтен8 како се к господство ти храбро и племенито понѣло при господин8 деспот8 и цар8 т8рьском**" (18. 5. 1414) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 290.

[172] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 345. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 28.

Untangling the Bosnian-Hungarian knot

As a result of Duke Sandalj's absence from Bosnia during the summer of 1413, when he and his allies participated in the battle against Musa, Herzog Hrvoje was able to confiscate Sandalj's possessions during the first half of June 1413, according to King Sigismund's letter addressed to the Ragusans. As well as accusing Hrvoje of inviting the Ottomans to "our Bosnian kingdom," Sigismund declared him an outlaw, dispossessed him of all his possessions and titles, and ordered his vassals to attack him and seize his property.[173] Taking advantage of the situation, the citizens of Split managed to escape Herzog Hrvoje's control on the first day of July 1413.[174] When Sigismund wrote to the people of Split at the beginning of August, he explained how Hrvoje attacked Sandalj's possessions while the duke was at war with the Ottomans.[175] Hrvoje then appealed for assistance to the Venetians, who, at the end of August, rejected his request.[176] It has not been determined which of Sandalj's possessions were in question, but it was most likely the ownership of Drijeva.[177] Ragusans responded to Sigismund's command to occupy the islands that Hrvoje already held in his possession in mid-July 1413.[178] It appears that Sandalj was also fulfilling his duty by attacking Hrvoje. This is evidenced by Hrvoje's pleas to the Venetians to tell Sandalj to stop the attack.[179]

[173] (17. 6. 1413) Ljubić, *Listine* VII, 123-124. Radonić, *Akta i povelje* I/1, 221–222. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 226. Ćirković, "Dve godine", 30. Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*, 79. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 125.

[174] (1. 7. 1413) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 221. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 226. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 126.

[175] (1. 8. 1413) Fejer, *Codex diplomaticvs* X/V, 407-409. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 172. Lovrenović, "Modeli", 30.

[176] (25. 8. 1413) Ljubić, *Listine* VII, 127-128. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 126.

[177] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 240. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 67. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 199.

[178] (14. 7. 1413) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 224-225.

[179] (18. 11. 1413) Ljubić, *Listine* VII, 137-138. Ćirković, "Dve godine", 30. Bogumil Hrabak, "Venecija i Sandalj Hranić u njegovom širenju po Primorju počev od Herceg Novog", *Boka* 11, Herceg Novi 1979, 212. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 199.

As a result, Hrvoje remained lonely and attempted to obtain an opportunity through Queen Barbara to justify himself before Sigismund, to whom he remained faithful, according to his own words. He requested to be judged by Sigismund, King of Poland, Herzog of Austria and, what is particularly interesting, members of the Order of the Dragon, which was composed, among others, of Bosnian nobles and Stefan Lazarević. However, Hrvoje's pleas were in vain.[180]

Exposed to the merciless attacks of his neighbors, Hrvoje watched his possessions shrink more and more. After presenting his intentions to the Venetians in November 1413, Hrvoje began realizing his plans, mentioning how he could obtain assistance from the Ottomans in the middle of the following year. From a certain point, the Ottoman presence in Bosnia was an everyday occurrence. In June 1414, in cooperation with the Ragusans Michael Caboga and Marino de Stefano, according to the Ragusan accusations, Hrvoje worked to bring the Ottomans to Bosnia.[181] Within the next month, the Ragusans informed Sigismund of the Ottoman invasion of Bosnia, which posed a threat to Duke Sandalj.[182] During this time Mehmed's second ally, Despot Stefan, enjoyed the support of the Ottoman sultan. As soon as the war ended in July 1413, the situation in the Despotate calmed down. Ragusans described the events in the neighborhood in a letter to the Buda court in May 1414, mentioning that the situation in the Despotate was peaceful, in light of the extremely turbulent events in Bosnia.[183]

Apparently, a portion of the Ottoman forces remained on Bosnian territory during the winter months.[184] The situation in Bosnia at the beginning

[180] Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 226. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 173.

[181] (25. 6. 1414) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 737. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 175. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 227-228.

[182] (10. 7. 1414) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 245. "de scribendo pro factis siue nouis Turchorum qui sunt in Bosna" It has been adopted: "de induciando" (28. 7. 1414) Ref. XXXIV, 227. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 47. Ćirković, "Dve godine", 31. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 230.

[183] (21. 5. 1414) "la contrada de Rassa sta in paxe" Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium,* 243. In more detail in: Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 228-236.

[184] Neven Isailović-Aleksandar Jakovljević, "Šah Melek (prilog istoriji turskih upada u Bosnu 1414-1415. godine)", in: *Spomenica akademika Sime Ćirkovića*, Istorijski institut, Beograd 2011, 447.

of 1415 is evidenced by a letter from the Ragusans addressed to Đurađ Branković, stating that they had not been able to send envoys earlier because the route through Bosnia was unsafe due to the Ottomans.[185] Ragusan council decisions indicate that attempts were made in December 1414 and January 1415 to send envoys to the despot Stefan and the Brankovićs.[186] As of 1415, the political situation in Bosnia was also somewhat ambiguous. In February, the Ragusans addressed Tvrtko II, titling him as "his highness King Tvrtko,"[187] while only a month later they ceded the Ston tribute to King Ostoja.[188]

The Ragusans reported to their suzerain Sigismund about the situation in the Ragusan hinterland at the end of June 1415. They wrote that Turkish detachments under Şah Melek plundered Bosnia's areas for three months, but he withdrew in mid-June and a small number of Ottoman soldiers remained with Tvrtko II. As reported by their merchants in the Despotate, Ishak-bey was preparing to leave Skopje with his army for Bosnia, but that he would not attack Bosnia since the sultan had been paid tribute by the Bosnians. King Ostoja and Duke Sandalj felt threatened by the Ottomans. The Bosnian king had retreated to his fortresses, while Sandalj's strategy involved bribing Ottoman officials. According to these statements, Despot Stefan had good relations with the Ottomans and felt no threat from them. From a letter they received in mid-June from their merchants from Srebrenica, the Ragusans learned of the preparations made by the Hungarian troops who arrived in Usora land under the fortress of Doboj.[189] This

[185] (January 1415) Lett. di Lev. VII, 118v-119. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 46. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 71.

[186] "eligendi tres qui ponant in forma in quibus rebus debet distribui donum mittendum domino Georgio Vuchoeuich et domino dispoto et que res debent emi" (8. 12. 1414) Ref. XXXIV, 235v. "dono faciendo domino despoto domine Mare et domino Georgio Vuchoeuich" (8. 12. 1414) Ibid., 235v. "officiales electos pro dano faciendo domino dispot domine Mare et domino Georgio Vuchoeuich" (10. 12. 1414) Ibid., 236. (8. 1. 1415) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 1.

[187] (9. and 23. 2. 1415) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 501.

[188] (2. 3. 1415) DSA, Consilium Rogatorum I, 6.

[189] (28. 6. 1415) "Habemus etiam per mercatores nostros de Sclavonia qualiter unus caporalis nominatus Isach Theucer congregat ad Scopiam gentes Theucras, qui his diebus expectatur in Bosna pro eundo ad raubarias versus ponentem extra regnum Bosne, in quo regno nil depredantur. Que omne contrate sunt ad ipsorum obedienciam, dando tributum domino imperatore Theucrorum pro se

letter from Ragusa indicates that the Serbian despot had precise knowledge of the situation in Bosnia. It should be noted, however, that regardless of Despot Stefan's good relations with the Ottomans, the growing influence of the Ottomans in Bosnia posed a danger to the Despotate as well. Sandalj's difficult position was an exceptional problem for the Serbian despot in the Bosnian situation, as it prevented him from further cooperating with the Despotate.[190]

Sigismund presented the campaign in Bosnia during which he fought the Ottomans as an activity to defend Hungarian rights in Bosnia.[191] The final confrontation between the Hungarian army led by Paul Čupor of Monoszló, János Garai and János Maróti and the Ottoman detachments took place in July 1415 in Lašva. The Hungarian army suffered a great defeat, and many noblemen were captured. The fate of many Hungarian nobles was unknown for many years. Some were held by the Bosnians and others by the Ottomans.[192] The commander of the Hungarian army, János Maróti, was captured by the Ottomans. He sent a letter to Ragusa from Podzvečan in Kosovo through a merchant from Split. The merchant met Maróti at the beginning of August 1415, when the letter was written. Maróti stated that the king and the nobility united against the Hungarians, Sandalj reconciled with Hrvoje, and the sultan confirmed Ostoja as king. Since Maróti spent some time near the despot's borders, his claim that the Hungarians were at risk of losing the territories of Despots Stefan and Đurađ Branković

conservando. Rex vero Hostoia stat in suis fortiliciis non audendo sumere fiduciam Theucrorum aliquo modo. Dominus voivoda Sandal se bene habet erga fidelitatem serenitatis vestre exigando se a Theucris cum non parvis donis. Dominus despotus de Sclavonia est in bona prosperitate et pace cum Turcis per omnes suos confines." Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 249-250. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 233-234. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 178.

190 Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 346. Kalić, "Snaženje Despotovine", 94.

191 Dubravko Lovrenović, "Bitka u Lašvi 1415. godine", in: *Raukarov zbornik*, Filozofski fakultet, Zagreb 2005, 277.

192 Ćirković, "Dve godine", 41. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 108-109. Zrinka-Nikolić Jakus, "Obitelj Čupor Moslavački", *Radovi Zavoda za znanstvenoistraživački umjetnički rad* 4, Bjelovar 2011, 285-286. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 235. More in: Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 245-249.

probably represents a credible testimony of the state of affairs in these regions at that time. Maróti's information was confirmed by some other captured Hungarian noblemen.[193] The Ragusans sent Maróti's letter, which arrived in Ragusa through one of their merchants, to the Buda court in mid-August.

Information about the events in Lašva from July 1415 and the consequences of the battle is provided by the despot's biographer Constantine. According to his account, the sultan sent his army to confront the Hungarians via Bosnia, where the Hungarians were defeated, after which the Ottomans captured the Hungarian bans and brought them to the sultan. The despot used his resources and reputation to ransom of some Hungarian captives, including Petar and Ivaniš Mirojevski.[194] Hungarian sources support Constantine's claims. A year after the Battle of Lašva, Sigismund requested funds to be collected for the ransom of Hungarian prisoners. At that time, it was also mentioned that a certain Petrus Cheh de Lewa was sent to Despot Stefan due to his involvement in negotiations regarding the captives. The collected funds were to be handed over to Stefan for the ransom of Hungarian nobles.[195] Due to the fact that the Serbian despot was on good terms with the Ottomans, as well as being a part of the Hungarian nobles, Sigismund attempted to take advantage of his position. On this occasion, it is interesting to cite the will from March 1417, by which Marin Bona from Ragusa bequeathed a certain amount for the ransom of Christians captured by the Ottomans in the territory of Bosnia and the Despotate.[196] Although he enjoyed Sultan Mehmed's benevolence, at the time of the Ottoman penetration into Bosnia, the despot was on the list of potential participants in the formation of a poorly organized alliance against the Ottomans, led by

193 (6. 8. 1415) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium,* 251-252. Bariša Krekić, "Cirkulacija informacija između Dubrovnika i Bosne u prvoj polovini XV vijeka", *GDI BiH* XXXIX, Sarajevo 1988, 53. Lovrenović, "Bitka u Lašvi", 278. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 247.

194 Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 312.

195 Fejer, *Codex diplomaticvs* X/VIII, 564-569. Lovrenović, "Bitka u Lašvi", 288. Sima Ćirković, "O jednom posredovanju despota Stefana između Ugarske i Turske", *Istraživanja* 16, Novi Sad 2005, 230-231.

196 Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, 177.

the Byzantine emperor Manuel II with the Ottoman pretender Mustafa and the ruler of Karaman. However, Stefan did not end up participating in this alliance.[197]

[197] Ljubić, *Listine* VII, 217. (22. 9. 1416) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 276-277. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 37. Prlender, "Ugarsko-srpski odnosi", 107.

The interweaving of influences in Zeta

The war between the Republic of Venice and the Zeta lord Balša III (1403–1421), which started in 1405, was a reflection of earlier conflicts between the Venetians and Balša's father Đurađ II, and it concerned the coastal area in Zeta. Balša III, who ruled the country with the help of his mother Jelena, succeeded in provoking rebellions among Venetian subjects, taking advantage of the situation and occupying Skhodra and Drisht. This marked the beginning of long-lasting conflict between the Balšićs and the Venetians.[198] The Venetians feared that Balša could be provided with additional help by his uncle, Despot Stefan, so at the beginning of January, before Balša managed to seize the coastal towns, they sent military reinforcements to this territory.[199] We follow the timeline of the Bosnian side's involvement in Zeta circumstances from May 1405, when the Venetians unsuccessfully offered Duke Sandalj 1,000 ducats annually and 3,000 ducats as a one-time payment, for the conquest and securing of Venetian rule over Skhodra and Drisht.[200] Even though the Venetians failed to win Sandalj for their side, they were able to regain the lost territories by the summer of 1405, and in the fall, Herzog Hrvoje and King Tvrtko II attempted to take over Ulcinj, Bar and Budva for Sandalj.[201] The Bosnian side tried to obtain territorial concessions in Zeta for Sandalj in the following years as well, and thus benefit from the resulting crisis, but without much success.[202] The envoys demanded that Budva and the surrounding villages be handed over

[198] Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 112. Božidar Šekularac, *Crna Gora u doba Balšića*, Obod, Cetinje 2011, 46.

[199] (10. 1. 1405) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 51. Ivan Božić, "Prvi skadarski rat", in: *Istorija Crne Gore* II/2, Redakcija za istoriju Crne Gore, Titograd 1970, 99.

[200] (7. 5. 1405) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 56. Ivan Božić, "Albanija i Arbanasi u XIII, XIV i XV veku", *Glas* SANU CCCXXXVIII, Beograd 1983, 63.

[201] (13. 9. 1405) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 63-64. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 201. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 112.

[202] (8. 6. 1406) (15. 12. 1407) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 78, 107. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 201. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 114-115.

to Sandalj, to which the Venetians replied that they could not make a statement before talking to Despot Stefan and Mara, who also expressed their pretensions to the disputed places.[203] The despot's active engagement is also illustrated by the response of the Venetian authorities to Stefan and Mara's inquiries from May 1406, when the Venetians insisted on paying their own expenses for the return of their possessions seized by Balša.[204] A closed circle of diplomatic negotiations regarding Zeta provides information from mid-March 1405, when Ragusans were informed of the stay of the despot's envoys with Duke Sandalj.[205] Due to the fact that even the despot's mediation in June and October 1407 did not bring peace with Balša,[206] the Venetians replied to Sandalj in December that they were ready to cede Budva to him, if by May of the following year he conquered Zeta and expelled Balša.[207] Again, the Bosnian duke did not engage militarily in the events in Zeta. At the beginning of 1408 the Venetians restarted the negotiations. The instructions to the proveditore from February of that year still mentioned Sandalj's involvement in Zeta, for which he would be rewarded with Budva, Bar, or even more possessions, depending on his attitude. From the instructions, we learn that the decision on the potential handover of Budva to Sandalj was communicated, among others, to the despot's envoys. The envoys, in order to reach an agreement with Balša, were able to correspond, apart from Sandalj, with Despot Stefan, Mara and others.[208]

Despite efforts and agreements on a short-term truce, negotiations continued the following year. The Venetians still considered the option of an agreement with Sandalj, along with solving the Zeta issue through Despot

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[203] (12. 6. 1406) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 80. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 114. Hrabak, "Venecija i Sandalj Hranić", 203. Bogumil Hrabak, "Venecija i bosanska država", *Istraživanja* 12, Novi Sad, 1979, 443.

[204] (18. 5. 1406) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 75. Kalić, "Nemirno doba", 78.

[205] (18. 3. 1405) Lett. di Lev. IV, 85-85v.

[206] (June 1407) (6. 10. 1407) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 97-99, 102. Kalić, "Nemirno doba", 78.

[207] (23. 12. 1407) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 109. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 171.

[208] (18. 2. 1408) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 111-114. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 116-117. Hrabak, "Venecija i Sandalj Hranić", 204.

Stefan and Mara.[209] After Sandalj and Jelena got married at the end of 1411, more significant changes occurred.[210] Sandalj became more actively involved with the Venetians on the side of Balša during this period, meaning that the despot's role was significantly reduced. Sandalj's envoys began negotiations with the Venetians in April 1412, when Balša was besieging the Venetian possessions in Zeta.[211] In November 1412, Sandalj's envoys took the role of Balša's representatives and signed a peace agreement at the end of January 1413. As a result of the signing of the agreement, the borders were restored to their original position at the beginning of the war.[212] The dispute between the Venetians and Balša III demonstrates the ambitions in Zeta, expressed by Duke Sandalj and Despot Stefan. It is quite certain that Sandalj's marriage to Balša's mother played a significant role in the resolution of this situation. At that point in time, the fact that the Serbian despot withdrew and left the resolution of the dispute to Duke Sandalj illustrates the quality of relations between Sandalj and Stefan.

[209] (17. 5. 1408) (14. 1. 1407) (20. 1. 1409) (9. 2. 1409) Ljubić, *Listine* V, 116-117, 145-147, 147-148, 149-153, 160. Hrabak, "Venecija i bosanska država", 444.

[210] (8. 12. 1411) (11. 12. 1411) (12. 12. 1411) Ref. XXXIIII, 212, 212v, 304, 304v.

[211] (22. 4. 1412) (29. 4. 1412) Ljubić, *Listine* VI, 252-254, 256-258. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 140-141.

[212] (22. 11. 1412) (26. 11. 1412) Ljubić, *Listine* VII, 23-28. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 141-142.

II

BOSNIA AND THE DESPOTATE IN THE REGIONAL CONTEXT (1415–1430)

II
BOSNIA AND THE DESPOTATE IN THE REGIONAL CONTEXT (1415–1430)

A change in the political balance following the Hungarian defeat at Lašva enabled the Ottomans to gain a greater influence in Central Europe. The Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate, as a kind of shield of feudalism on the margins of elite medieval Europe, were to become a battlefield with the task of preserving it from the new "infidels." From words to deeds, sometimes it's too long a journey. While King Sigismund visited the Hungarian magnates, trying to collect funds for the ransom of the Hungarian nobles captured in the Bosnian regions, the Ottomans demonstrated their military power in Bosnia. Due to the internal changes in Bosnia from 1415, when the Bosnian rulers became polarized, the region's already unhealthy climate became worse. The process of establishing a new configuration of relations, which began with the assassination of Pavle Radinović, was rounded off by the death of Herzog Hrvoje in 1416.[213] The discussion of political relations between Bosnia and the Despotate at the beginning of this decade is based on the few sources that have been preserved.

The Ottoman presence in Bosnia and the Despotate after the Battle of Lašva lasted until the end of 1416. Ragusan reports drafted for Sigismund in December 1416 focused on the situation in Bosnia and the Despotate, and noted that the Ottomans had completely left Bosnia and the Despotate due to the sultan's reorientation and involvement in Thessaloniki, where he had to take action against the combined coalition of the Byzantine emperor and his brother Mustafa.[214] Nevertheless, the Ottomans did not move too far. Ac-

[213] Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 235-236.

[214] "De novis Teucrorum: ad presens nullus exercitus est in regno Bosne aut Rasie, quia eorum imperator est occupatus Salonichi circa obsidionem fratris ipsius, qui erat in Vlachia, qui imperator Constantinopolitanus favorem exhibet." (25. 12. 1416) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 264. Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja (opet)", 450. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 218.

cording to the Ragusan instruction issued at the end of August 1417, new Ottoman movements were taking place along the Despotate's borders. It can be seen that the easing of Ottoman pressure did not lead to significant changes in Bosnia, where the nobles were *in solita et magna discordia*.[215] A few months earlier, at the end of March 1417, the Ragusans also mentioned the Bosnian discord and the feud between the Pavlović and Kosača families.[216]

During the following years, internal conflicts continued in the Bosnian state, allowing Ottoman detachments to enter and interfere in Bosnian affairs once again. The Pavlovićs, united with Ostoja in 1417, succeeded in pressuring Duke Sandalj, who, according to some comparisons, reached the lowest point in his political career at that time.[217] The Ottomans helped Sandalj resolve the dispute with the Pavlović family the following year. Jelena's son Balša III assisted him in these efforts.[218] Ostoja most likely died in September 1418, and the royal throne was filled by his son Stjepan Ostojić (1418–1421). Ostoja's successor maintained good relations with the nobles Pavlović, who were at the height of their power at that time.[219] However, the reign of King Stjepan Ostojić did not last long. Even before the overthrow of Ostojić in May 1420, the Ragusans' actions indicated the influence of Tvrtko II on Bosnia. During that period, a council was held at which the Bosnian nobles elected Tvrtko II as king for the second time, to whom the Ragusans turned as early as June 1420 regarding the confirmation of the purchase of Konavle.[220]

The sources do not allow for a detailed description of the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate during this time. Specifically, there are no significant data in the sources regarding the despot's activities in those

[215] (26. 8. 1417) Lett. di Lev. VI, 138v. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 40. Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja (opet)", 450.

[216] (31. 3. 1417) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 284.

[217] Ćorović, *Historija*, 418-420. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 246. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 215-217.

[218] Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 217.

[219] Ćorović, *Historija*, 420. Perojević, "Stjepan Ostoja (opet)", 451. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 246.

[220] Ćorović, *Historija*, 424. Marko Perojević, "Stjepan Ostojić", in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 458-459. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 249.

years that would illustrate his policy towards the Bosnian state. A conflict between the despot and the Ragusans over customs policy, which began in 1417, continued for several years. There were a number of Ragusan envoys who were recorded at the despot's court, and a number of restrictive measures were imposed, but the dispute remained largely within the framework of economic relations between Ragusa and the Despotate. This period did not witness any specific action on the part of Despot Stefan that may indicate an interest in Sandalj's difficult position from 1418, with whom he had good relations since 1411. Robberies of merchants traveling through Bosnia towards the Despotate, such as that of Nicola Poza from Ragusa in June 1418, were an integral part of the daily trade that took place on Bosnian roads.[221] In July 1420, Duke Sandalj, the despot's son-in-law, was accused of robbing a caravan traveling from Ragusa to the Despotate in Jezera.[222] However, there were no contentious situations in the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate. This is illustrated by the fact that in August 1419, Stefan received a license to export weapons to Ragusa, which, according to the Ragusan decision, he could transport *per viam Bosne et non per viam Zente*.[223] Once again, Bosnia and the Despotate had political ambitions that intersected on the issue of Zeta during this period.

[221] (30. 6. 1418) Iorga, *Notes* II, 168.

[222] (9. 7. 1420) DSA, Lamenta de foris IV, 212. Kurtović, *Ispisi građe za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne (Lamenta de foris)*, 92. Dušanka Dinić-Knežević, *Tkanine u privredi srednjovekovnog Dubrovnika*, SANU, Beograd 1982, 65. Marica Malović-Đukić, "Drobnjaci u vreme Kosača", in: *Kosače-Osnivači Hercegovine*, 455.

[223] (9. 8. 1419) DSA, Consilium Minus II, 78.

Duke Sandalj and Despot Stefan's policy towards the Venetians

After the peace that lasted until April 1418, the Republic of Venice became preoccupied with new conflicts with the Hungarians, which were exploited by Zeta lord Balša III. Conflicts between the Hungarians and Venetians were more severe in the middle of 1419, when a war was fought over the Dalmatian possessions of Split, Trogir, and the islands. It seems that Balša caused a lot of problems for the Venetians already from the beginning of 1419. The Venetians were in a position to go to war with the Hungarians and the Ottomans, which gave Balša, encouraged by his good relations with Duke Sandalj and Despot Stefan, the opportunity to gain territory at the Republic's expense. Moreover, the quality of the relationship between Despot Stefan and Balša is illustrated by the Ragusan authorities' decision from December 1416, when the monk Dionisio was sent to both of them, regarding an unknown business.[224] Balša conducted military activities in the vicinity of Shkodra and Drisht during March 1419.[225] At the beginning of April, the Venetian Senate announced a reward for the capture of Balša, dead or alive, in the amount of two thousand, and the amount would later be increased to eight thousand ducats. At the same time, a decision was made to send aid to Shkodra for fighting against Balša's army.[226] The Zeta lord's attacks did not stop, and in August 1419 the Venetian Senate tried to involve the Ottomans in the conflict with Balša, although it is unknown how successful they were in their intentions.[227] Parallel to the activities in Zeta, regarding the exchange of captives with Balša after the capture of Drisht and the

[224] (17. 12. 1416) Cons. Minus I, 99.

[225] Kalić, "Snaženje Despotovine", 96. The same month, the Ragusan authorities allowed Balša to export weapons. (13. 3. 1419) Cons. Rog. II, 17v.

[226] (8. 4. 1419) Ljubić, *Listine* VII, 281-282.

[227] (17. 8. 1419) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 3.

fortification of Shkodra,[228] in September 1419, the Venetians discussed the letters of the Bosnian king who offered to fight against the Venetian enemies.[229] Active participation on the Venetian battlefields in Zeta would draw the Bosnian king Stjepan Ostojić into direct conflict with Sandalj and Despot Stefan, who were considered Balša's allies for years.[230] However, it appears that there was no clause in the Bosnian-Venetian alliance pertaining to the Bosnian king's involvement in the southern areas. Venetians went the furthest on this issue, requesting the king to influence Sandalj's position regarding Kotor.[231] Apart from the diplomatic correspondence, the proposed alliance did not materialize militarily, primarily because of the hesitancy of the Bosnian king and the Venetians' inability to reciprocate with adequate service, as they did not provide a strong shield for the Bosnian state in its potential defense against the Ottomans and Hungarians.

During 1420, the conflict in Zeta and the issue of Kotor overlapped in a certain manner. Back in July 1419, the people of Kotor offered help to the Venetians against Balša, to which Balša responded the following year by threatening the surrounding area of Kotor.[232] The layers of Kotor's problems have been unraveling since the spring of 1420. At Kotor's invitation in February and March 1420, the Venetians took over the town, which took place by July of that year.[233] In the middle of the year, negotiations with Balša regarding a settlement were initiated.[234] The Venetians reported to the captain of Shkodra at the end of November 1420 to continue negotiations with Balša regarding peace and instruct Sandalj's envoys to come freely once the duke had decided to do so.[235] Sandalj's envoys expressed their concern to the

[228] (9. 9. 1419) (11. 9. 1419) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 3-4, 5-6.

[229] (9. 9. 1419) Ljubić, *Listine* VII, 298-299. Perojević, "Stjepan Ostojić", 454.

[230] Perojević, "Stjepan Ostojić", 454. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 284.

[231] Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 88-89.

[232] Kalić, "Snaženje Despotovine", 97.

[233] Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 150.

[234] (23. 5. 1420) (19. 6. 1420) (27. 6. 1420) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 17-20.

[235] (20. 11. 1420) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 57-58. Kalić, "Snaženje Despotovine", 98. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 150. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 247.

Venetians about their activities around Kotor in March of the following year, but were informed that they were compelled to declare their rule in Kotor in order to prevent Balša from conquering it for himself. Alternatively, in the same reply, the Venetians offered the Bosnian duke the opportunity to intervene with Balša, allowing him to keep the tribute he had previously received from Kotor.[236] Sandalj did not engage militarily on Balša's side in the Zeta issue, but he did not give in to the Venetian proposals either. The Venetians later disclosed information about Sandalj's diplomatic engagement on Balša's side.[237] The Bosnian duke could have potentially leveraged Balša's pressure on the Republic in Zeta more effectively through parallel negotiations concerning Kotor, however, he decided to negotiate precisely at the time when Balša temporarily stopped the attacks. During this period, the Venetians attempted to take advantage of the possession of Kotor and ordered the Rector of Kotor to use all possible means in the war against Balša.[238]

In April 1421, negotiations between Balša and the Venetians indicated a potential solution to the situation. Just at the time when the Venetian Senate issued permission for peace negotiations with Balša's envoys, Despot Stefan's cousin Balša came to his court.[239] According to Constantine the Philosopher, Balša, foreseeing his impending death due to a prolonged illness, came to the despot's court. After his death, the Serbian despot arranged a dignified funeral for him.[240] Balša's deteriorating health was reflected in the decisions of the Ragusan council by the appointment of a doctor to treat

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236 (10. 3. 1421) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 73-75. Ivan Božić, "Drugi skadarski rat i kraj Balšića", in: *Istorija Crne Gore* II/2, 129. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 151-152.

237 Branislav Milutinović, "Borba Balšića sa Mlečanima za zetske primorske gradove", in: *Srednjovjekovna istorija Crne Gore kao polje istraživanja*, Istorijski institut, Podgorica 199, 226.

238 (7. 2. 1421) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 69-70.

239 (5. 4. 1421) (7. 4. 1421) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 81, 83. Jovanka Kalić, *Srbi u poznom srednjem veku*, Javno preduzeće Službeni list SRJ, Second edition, Beograd 2001, 111. On the same day that Balša's envoys were negotiating with the Venetians, the Venetian council responded to the envoy of the Bosnian king, emphasizing their desire to maintain friendly relations with him. (7. 4. 1421) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 84.

240 Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 313. Ivan Božić, "Drugi skadarski rat i kraj Balšića", 128-131. Purković, *Knez i despot Stefan Lazarević*, 113.

him.[241] Ragusan chronicler Giacomo Luccari notes that Balša, on his deathbed, gave Zeta to the despot.[242] Balša's death left certain voids in the Zeta context, which all involved parties attempted to exploit. The fastest were the Venetians who occupied Drisht, Ulcinj and Bar with a hurried offensive in the middle of 1421. Venetian proveditores were already being elected for the conquered territories at the beginning of July.[243] As one of Balša's allies, Duke Sandalj became involved as a potential heir to his possessions. The experienced Bosnian duke could base his legitimacy over Balša's possessions on the fact that he was married to Balša's mother. Sandalj's envoys stayed with the Venetians in mid-July, when they received an answer to the requests for the cession of Bar, Budva and Zeta. This time as well, the Venetians stressed the importance of these possessions for their own defense.[244]

While Sandalj's initiative in Zeta ended in diplomatic contacts, the activities of Despot Stefan were more concrete in a military sense, according to the despot's biographer.[245] In August 1421, the Serbian despot appeared in Zeta with an army, further complicating the situation.[246] Negotiations between the Venetians and Despot Stefan regarding Balša's inheritance began in August. The Senate ordered the Venetian proveditore for Albania to act in the capacity of a Venetian envoy at the despot's court in September. On the same day, the answer to the inquiry of the despot's envoy regarding Balša's possessions was drawn up and an envoy was appointed who was sent to the

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241 (8. 11. 1417) (20. 3. 1418) Cons. Minus I, 163v, 194v. (4. 10. 1418) (1. 11. 1418) (18. 10. 1419) Cons. Minus II, 15v, 19v, 88v. (20. 1. 1417) (21. 3. 1418) (3. 11. 1418) DSA, Consilium Maius I, 86, 106, 132v. (8. 1. 1420) (20. 4. 1420) Cons. Maius II, 21, 27.

242 "Mori in qursto mezo Balsa Signor di Zenta, nel cuistato leno Stefano Despot di Servuia, con ingegno di Masaach suo Ceonik; E subito Stefano inuesti di Zenta Giorgio gigliuola di Vuk Brancouich, e di Marra sua sorella" Lvccari, *Copioso*, 85.

243 (3. 7. 1421) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 94-95.

244 (13. 7. 1421) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 95. Radonić, "Grossvojvode", 447. Momčilo Spremić, "Pripajanje Zete Despotovini i širenje mletačke vlasti u Primorju", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 197. Ivan Božić, "Zetske vojvode pod despotima", in: *Nemirno pomorje XV veka*, SKZ , Beograd 1979, 175.

245 Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 313.

246 (22. 8. 1421) Lett. di Lev. VIII, 165v. Cons. Rog. III, 54v.

despot's court.[247] In the conversation with the despot's envoys, the Venetians pointed out that earlier Sandalj came forward as a mediator for reconciliation between Balša and Venice and that he favored Balša.[248] Despot Stefan managed to capture Drisht and Bar with his army and signed a six-month truce in November.[249] Already in the spring of 1422, negotiations continued between Stefan and the Venetians, which lasted until the end of the year.[250] The fact that since the despot took over the initiative in Zeta, Duke Sandalj no longer claimed Balša's possessions is particularly significant.

The Republic of Venice, in addition to its activity in Zeta and Dalmatia, also actively participated in the economic race in Bosnia, where its main competitors were the Ragusans. In Bosnia, the Venetians had a particular interest in acquiring the economic center of Drijeva, which they sought to lease. Ragusan diplomacy was able to see through their activities concerning Drijeva with the Bosnian king and Sandalj. In one instruction for the envoy to Duke Sandalj from October 1422, the Ragusans outlined all damages the Venetians had committed in the Bosnian neighborhood due to their greed, emphasizing the damage they had caused to Balša in Zeta.[251] In mid-October 1422, the Ragusans wrote to Sigismund regarding the negative impact of the Venetians in Bosnia on the Ragusan trade. At that time, they pointed out that they had already engaged King Tvrtko II, Sandalj and Zlatonosović regarding the mentioned problem, and they begged Sigismund to refer them to Despot Stefan, with whom they are on good terms.[252] On the last day of 1422, the

[247] (16. 8. 1421) Cons. Rog. III, 53. (9. 9. 1421) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 109-115. This Venetian delegation was in Ragusa at the end of September. (26. 9. 1421) Cons. Minus II, 218.

[248] "Et postea interveniente medio et interpositione magnifici domini Sandali, et ad preces et promisiones per eum porrectas nostro dominio, nos perseverantes in nostra consueta et bona dispositione, ipsa loca per nostrum dominium aquisita et de eius manibus cum bona et iusta guerra accepta, dedimus nostra liberalitate ipsi Balse, qui fidelitatem et pacem per eum promissam nostro dominio servare debebat." (9. 9. 1420) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 111.

[249] Spremić, "Pripajanje Zete Despotovini", 197.

[250] (21. 4. 1422) (28. 4. 1422) (16. 5. 1422) (16. 8. 1422) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 133, 152, 157, 159, 165, 171, 188. (11. 3. 1422) (6. 5. 1422) Cons. Rog. III, 78v, 85. (7. 5. 1422) Cons. Maius II, 90v.

[251] (30. 10. 1422) Lett. di Lev. III, 95-95v.

[252] (14. 10. 1422) Lett. di Lev. III, 92.

Ragusan authorities addressed Sigismund once more, asking his suzerain to engage his vassals King Tvrtko II, Duke Sandalj, the Zlatonosović brothers and Despot Stefan against the Venetians.[253] In the same letter, the Ragusans pointed out that Despot Stefan is waging war against the Venetians in Zeta, and therefore it is difficult to determine on what basis he could be useful to them in Bosnia. Certainly, it was a Ragusan cry that should have resonated more strongly at the Buda court. Ragusa's subsequent letters to their suzerain illustrate the inactivity of Despot Stefan in this case.

After the threat to the Ragusan economy posed by the Venetians ended, the Ragusan authorities informed Sigismund that King Tvrtko II, Duke Sandalj, and the Zlatonosovićs, did not accept the Venetian offers, without mentioning the possible involvement of the Serbian despot.[254] In the following year, the Serbian despot imposed an economic blockade on the Venetians on his territory near Bosnia, as a means of ensuring greater diplomatic maneuvering in the Zeta issue. In 1422, Venetian merchants in Srebrenica were also attacked, specifically the brothers Jacopo and Zanino Beltram, from whom the despot confiscated large quantities of lead. The brothers from Venice were trading companions with Peter Primović from Ragusa, and because of the damage caused to their merchant guild, they found themselves before the court of King Tvrtko II. However, the Bosnian king's judgment was annulled by the Ragusan court due to an established law that the Ragusans had with the people of Raška and Bosnia, according to which a verdict cannot be passed against a Ragusan citizen, unless half of the judges are his compatriots.[255]

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[253] "ad huc alias literas suas renouare dignetur ad dominum regem Bosne, ad voivodam Sandagl, ad Volchmir cum fratribus Slatonosouich et ad dominum despoth, recommittendo ciuitatem istam et ciues eiusdem." (31. 12. 1422) Lett. di Lev. VIII, 140. Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 294 (dated 21. 10. 1423). Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 187. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 230. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 251.

[254] (15. 3. 1423) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 290-291. Petar Matković, "Spomenici za dubrovačku povjest u vrieme ugarsko-hrvatske zaštite", *Rad JAZU* I, Zagreb 1869, 198.

[255] Ćorović, "Srebrenica za vlade despota Stevana", 72. Sima Ćirković, "Jedna bosanska kraljevska presuda", *GDI* BiH XIX (1970-1971), Sarajevo 1973, 9-13. Đuro Tošić, "Petar Primović-dubrovački trgovac i zakupac carina u Bosni", *GDI BiH* XXVII, Sarajevo 1986, 81-82. Hrabak, "Venecija i bosanska država", 484. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 21.

The conflicting personal ambitions within the Zeta issue did not affect the good relations between Despot Stefan and Sandalj Hranić. The Bosnian duke had a more extensive correspondence with the Venetians regarding Kotor, chronologically parallel to the despot's negotiations regarding Zeta possessions. The Bosnian duke's main concern in Kotor was to maintain Kotor's tributes and private property, which was his only benefit even before the Venetian occupation.[256] In June 1423, a Venetian delegation was sent to Sandalj with instructions that demonstrate the permeation of the Kotor-Zeta issue. The Venetians indicated that Sandalj was disrupting Kotor and supporting Despot Stefan's positions. The Venetians assigned their envoy to urge Sandalj to mediate in the Zeta issue between the Venetians and the despot.[257]

By the beginning of August 1423, the Venetians had completed the negotiations with Despot Stefan regarding Balša's possessions without Sandalj's assistance.[258] Within a few days, the Venetians had resolved the Kotor issue with Sandalj. The instruction to the Venetian envoy for Sandalj contains the answer to his requests previously discussed in the council. In earlier letters, Sandalj emphasized that he did not accept the condition according to which, in case his help was requested for his relative Despot Stefan by the Bosnian king or the Ottoman sultan against Venetian interests, he would have to remain passive. Venetians responded that it was not reasonable for Sandalj to be a friend of the Republic in Albania and an enemy *in partibus Sclavonie* at the same time. With the same instructions, the Venetians suggested to their envoy that Sandalj's demands could also be addressed to the Serbian despot.[259] In negotiations with the despot, the Venetians appeared

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[256] In more detail in: Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 246-249.

[257] (8. 6. 1423) Valentini, *Acta Albaniae Veneta* II/11, 248-249. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 155. Hrabak, "Venecija i Sandalj Hranić", 219. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 252-253.

[258] (2. 8. 1423) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 243-246, 248-253. Spremić, "Pripajanje Zete Despotovini", 198.

[259] "Cum die mensis iulii elapsi captum fuerit in isto consilio, quod miti deberet ad presentiam magnifici domini Sandali unus noster ambassiator, qui etiam, si esset necesse, iret ad ominum despotu Rassie… quod si serenissimus dominus suus rex Bossine vel dominus Turchorum dicto Sandali committeret, quod iret vel mitteret gentes suas i subsidium domini despoti cognati sui contra nostrum dominum et terras nostras Albanie … respondere et dicere, quod hoc non esset iustum nec

to feel closer to a common ground. The interpretation according to which the Venetians believed that the agreement with Sandalj would make it easier to negotiate with the despot could certainly be applied in the reverse order as well.[260] In mid-August 1423, the Venetians finally defined the terms of peace with despot Stefan, which included Đurađ Branković.[261]

The known details about negotiations between Sandalj and the Venetians do not imply further discussion regarding Sandalj's future engagement on Despot Stefan's side. According to the presented framework, the relationship between Sandalj and Despot Stefan during the period when the Zeta and Kotor question was open was based only on fragmentary information derived from Venetian instructions to the envoys. Certainly, the correspondence between Kosača and Lazarević between 1420 and 1423 was extensive, and this is also suggested by their uniform attitude towards the Venetian authorities. It seems that in the case of Kotor, both Sandalj and the Venetians eventually passed over the clause regarding Sandalj's future assistance to his wife's brother. Sandalj closed the Kotor agreement with a charter and accepted 600 ducats annually as a tribute from the salterns in Kotor.[262]

In addition to the presented framework, the Bosnian duke actively advocated on behalf of Stefan's and Jelena's relatives during the disputes with the Republic of Venice. At the beginning of June 1421, Sandalj requested a chancellor from Ragusa to come to Dabar and draw up a power of attorney for his cousin. There is a possibility that it was Jelena's sister Olivera.[263]

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conveniens, quod in partibus Albanie esset inimicus noster et guerizaret cum nostro dominio, et in partibus Sclavonie amicaretur nobis; et ista non conveniunt, quod sit amicus et inimicus in uno eodem tempore." (6. 8. 1423) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 246-247.

[260] Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 155-156.

[261] (12. 8. 1423) Ljubić, *Listine* VIII, 248-253. Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, 280. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 349. Momčilo Spremić, "Srpsko-mletačko razgraničenje u Zeti 1435. godine", in: *Prekinut uspon. Srpske zemlje u poznom srednjem veku*, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, Beograd 2005, 195-196.

[262] (1. 11. 1423) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 328-331. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 157-158. Hrabak, Venecija i Sandalj Hranić", 220. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 253.

[263] "Pro cancellario mittendo ad cognatam domini voiuode Sandagl usque ad Dabar"; "quod ad complacentiam voiuode Sandagl mittatur unus ex nostris cancellariis usque ad Dabar pro accipiendo vocem a cognata dicti voiuode pro una procura sibi opportuna" (3. 6. 1421) Cons. Rog. III, 40.

Approximately two years later, the Ragusans approached Sandalj about Olivera, Jelena's sister and the widow of Sultan Bayezid I, known as Despina. It referred to the response for Sandalj's envoy who brought a letter and asked for her unhindered arrival in Ragusa. After this, they indicated that they would permit her to visit their town, but they wanted to know what her brother, Despot Stefan, thought of her visit. Ragusans attributed their caution to the fact that they respected Despina, not just because of Sandalj, but also because she was the daughter of Lazar and the sister of their friend, Despot Stefan.[264] Given the fact that Olivera's delegation addressed the Ragusan authorities a few days earlier, Sandalj's mediating role in this request is certain.[265] Soon the ties between the Kosačas and the Lazarevićs were strengthened by another marriage. Most likely, during October 1424, Stjepan, son of Vukac Hranić and Jelena, daughter of Balša III and relative of Despot Stefan, got married. The Ragusans congratulated the Kosačas on the wedding at the beginning of November 1424.[266]

[264] "de firmando responsionem dandam ambaxiatori voiuode Sandagl pro factis domine Despine prout allatum fuit per oficiales ad id electos. Copia dicte responsionis dande in vulgari sermone sequitur ut infra, videlicet: Noi hauemo al dito vostra ambassata a noi sauiamente exposta per voi per parte del magnifico voyuoda Sandagl, che a noi piasesse di far uno saluoconducto franco e libero ala magnifica dona Despina che la possa vegnir star et andar liberamente et franchamente et meter suo depositi in nostro comun come fu detto per voi piu pienamente. Ala qual cosa vi rispondemo, che auegna, che questa nostra cita di Ragusa abia sempre a ciascun mantegnuda liberta et franchisia a poter vegnir, andar et star libero et franco nulla di men perche voi domandate priuilegio bollato patente vi dicemo cosi – che Dio lo sa, che per rispetto del magnifico padre dela detta et ancho del magnifico dispot, suo fra et del magnifico voyuoda Sandagl et per la sua propria magnificentia de ley molto voriamo et desideremo de compiasir a volunta et domanda del dicto voyuoda come de cordialissimo amico, ma per rispetto che questa magnifica dona e del sangue del magnifico meser lo dispot et dela camara sua el qual e a noi cordialissimo amigo et protector, molto ne piaseria chel detto meser lo dispot sopra di çio anche noi auisasse per sua lettera o per qualche bona persona. E con quele altre bone et belle parole le quale a messer lo Rectore et pizolo consiglio parera" (17. 5. 1423) Cons. Rog. III, 155v. Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 57. Miodrag Purković, *Kćeri kneza Lazara*, Pešić i sinovi, Beograd 1999, 110. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 66. Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 237.

[265] (15. 5. 1423) Cons. Rog. III, 154. Olivera received permission to come to Ragusa again in December 1427, but this time without the mediation of her son-in-law Duke Sandalj. (3. 10. 1427) (16. 12. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 36, 41v.

[266] "de honorando nuptias Stiepani nepotis voiouode Sandagl" (9. 11. 1424) Cons. Rog. III, 229. (13. 11. 1424) Cons. Maius III, 36. (25. 11. 1424) Cons. Minus III, 177v. Ludwig von Thallóczy, *Studien*

Between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary

The relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate towards the neighboring powers, Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, unfolded in a similar context in the 1420s. On the other hand, the Ottomans and the Hungarians approached the Balkan states through two diametrically opposed forms of foreign policy. Unlike in the earlier times, when the Hungarian sword dangled over Bosnian heads, and the Ottomans were busy with internal conflicts, in the early 1420s, the approach and balance of power were radically changed. In the historical episode of the beginning of Ottoman supremacy in this area, the Hungarian ruler assumed the role of an extra. The sharpness of the Ottoman sword in the Bosnian state was demonstrated in March 1420 when, in one of the incursions, the Ottoman voivode Ishak-bey killed the Bosnian nobleman Petar Pavlović.[267] After Petar's death and change on the Bosnian throne, where Tvrtko II sat for the second time, there was temporary stability in Bosnia's internal politics, during which the Ottoman influence weakened for a while. With the coming to power of the new Ottoman sultan Murad II (1421–1451), in a certain way, even the despot no longer felt safe from Ottoman attacks. Mehmed's death exhausted the Ottomans' gratitude for Stefan's help during the interregnum. The Serbian despot recognized the potential danger and already in 1422 made a new agreement with the new sultan. According to Stefan's biographer Constantine the Philosopher, the despot responded to the surrounding rulers' attempts to mobilize him against the sultan that he had sworn an oath to the sultan that he would do good to his children.[268]

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zur geschichte Bosniens und Serbiens im mittelalter, Verlag von Duncker & Humblot, München und Leipzig 1914, 168.

[267] Đuro Tošić, "Vojvoda Petar Pavlović-Prilog istoriji Bosne početkom XV vijeka", *JIČ* 1-2, Beograd 2001, 46. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 270-273.

[268] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 313

Sigismund reactivated Hungarian diplomatic activity in Bosnia in December 1422 by sending a letter to Duke Sandalj through the Ragusans under a thin veil of secrecy. Specifically, it concerned the intervention of the Ragusan suzerain in regard to Venetian activities in Bosnia.[269] While the Hungarian influence in Bosnia was weak, even through diplomatic relations, Despot Stefan actively participated in Sigismund's endeavors. During the end of 1421 and the beginning of 1422, the despot participated with Hungarian troops in the wars that were being waged by the Hungarian king against the Hussites. A year later, when Sigismund negotiated reconciliation with the Polish king Władysław II and the Lithuanian prince Witold, the Serbian despot was with the Hungarian king.[270] The despot's activities and stay with Sigismund in 1422 and 1423 can be seen as an example of a natural line of good relations between the Despotate and Hungary at all levels.

In the early 1420s, the Byzantine ruler John VIII Palaiologos (1425–1448) began an active campaign to organize a large anti-Ottoman coalition after being threatened by the Ottoman siege of Constantinople and having difficulty resisting Ottoman incursions into his territory. With this goal in mind, John VIII traveled to Venice, Milan, and Hungary in 1423.[271] At the time of the negotiations between Sigismund and John VIII regarding the anti-Ottoman coalition in June 1424, Despot Stefan also happened to be in Buda, whom Palaiologos considered to be interested in the alliance.[272] In addition to looking for allies in East-Central Europe, John VIII also focused

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[269] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 230.

[270] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 314. Jovanka Kalić, "Doba prividnog mira", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 209. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 228.

[271] (15. 11. 1423) Georgije Sfrances, *Hronika: Pad vizantijskog carstva*, Predanjske studije, Beograd 2011, 54-55. Ostrogorski, *Istorija Vizantije*, 518-519.

[272] Jovanka Kalić, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i Turci (1421-1427), *IČ* XXIX-XXX (1982-1983), Beograd 1983, 13. Kalić, "Despot Stefan i Vizantija", 38. Despot Stefan sent a letter from Buda to his local authorities in Hungary in mid-June. (15. 6. 1424) Aleksandar Krstić, "Pismo despota Stefana svojim ugarskim službenicima o pravima pavlinskog manastira svetog Lavrentija kod Budima", *SSA* 12, Beograd 2013, 133.

on the Balkan rulers. In mid-April 1423, Byzantine envoys traveled via Ragusa to Pljevlja, the town of Duke Sandalj.[273]

Due to the lack of information, it is difficult to provide a precise description of the intentions of this mission, but it was clearly at a time of strong Byzantine diplomatic activity, suggesting that it was a negotiation regarding the inclusion of the Bosnian duke into the alliance. The Bosnian duke and the Serbian despot were intrigued by the appearance of Mustafa, the brother of Sultan Murad, a new candidate for the Ottoman throne. In August 1425, Sandalj's envoy received a negative response from the Venetians to the requested advice regarding the sultan's brother Mustafa, from whom he planned to seek recognition of his possessions.[274] Mustafa's role certainly resonated in the Despotate. Stefan's envoy was in Venice the same month as Sandalj's, proposing to the Venetians that the Serbian-Venetian peace be concluded and that Venice and Hungary reconcile, while emphasizing the importance of Mustafa in the joint fight against Sultan Murad II.[275] Although fragmentary and without a detailed feedback, the presented data form a vague picture of parallel activities from Bosnia and the Despotate and possibly mutual communication.

At the time of negotiations between Ragusa and Duke Radoslav Pavlović regarding the purchase of Konavle conducted in the 1420s, a few pieces of information reveal Pavlović's relationship with the despot. Due to the frequency of diplomatic exchanges, the Ragusan authorities had their own envoy for a long time at Pavlović's court. In mid-July 1423, the authorities responded to a letter from the envoy that was at Radoslav's court who, a few days earlier, pointed out that the duke was delaying the negotiations over Konavle due to the birth of his son and fear of the Bosnian king's reaction. Of particular importance is the fact that Radoslav was expecting the arrival

[273] (13. 4. 1423) DAD, Diversa Cancellariae XLII, 129v-130. Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 802. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 257. Sima Ćirković, "Pljevlja u srednjem veku", in: *Istorija Pljevalja*, Opština Pljevalja, Pljevlja 2009, 80.

[274] (9. 8. 1425) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 5.

[275] Kalić, "Despot Stefan i Vizantija", 36.

of the Serbian despot in those days.[276] Although later sources do not confirm the despot's arrival at Pavlović's, it is quite certain that in the background of everyday life of that time, shown through the Ragusan perspective, the establishment and maintenance of a quality relationship between the Pavlovićs and the Lazarevićs were unfolding. The fact that Duke Radoslav sent an invitation to the Ragusan envoy Gondola in September 1424, who was then in the Despotate, speaks of their frequent relations. Pavlović's invitation to the Ragusan resident refers to the continuation of negotiations related to the sale of Konavle and indicates that the duke in Borač had timely information from the Despotate.[277] The border character of Pavlović's possessions influenced their economic activities in certain spheres, causing their business ventures to intersect with the operations of Despot Stefan. To the greatest extent, this referred to Srebrenica as a neighboring territory. Duke Radoslav's envoy was in Ragusa in July 1424, looking for a debt owed by the former Srebrenica customs officer and the then Ston rector Benedict Gondola. According to the incomplete information of the Ragusan authorities, envoy Rudič Popović pointed out that money was assigned by Petar Pavlović and Despot Stefan.[278] The dispute over Gondola's debt to Radoslav Pavlović continued in October 1424, however, the debt in silver was mentioned without further mention of the despot's role in the dispute.[279]

[276] "Et state ancora con buona sperança et buona solecitudine in questi facti come auete sempre facto che non saria marauigla chel nassimento del figlo che voi dite che a molto allegrato el signore et la venuta chel dice del despotho et la paura del Re di Bosna o tutte o qualche una di queste cose saria stata caxon del suo ritardare a risponderan" (17. 7. 1423) Lett. di Lev. IX, 8v.

[277] "E perche in essa littera se contiene chel dicto voiuoda vi se chiamar de Schiauenia per volonte che haueua de esser con vuy per darne la ditta sua meza parte de Canal" (20. 9. 1424) Lett. di Lev. IX, 48.

[278] "Captum fuit de dando licenciam ser Benedicti de Gondola, comiti Stagni, quod non liurando salarium possit venire Ragusium. Ita quod Ragusii esse possit octaua die augusti proxime futurom pro controuersia et lite quam ei mouere vult Rudez Popouich nuntius voyuode Radossaui Paulouich pro denariis alias assignatis per dominum despot et Petar Paulouich ipso ser Benedicto existente gabelloto Srebrnize dimitendo loco sui ad officium suum ser Sauinum de Babalio" (29. 7. 1424) Cons. Minus III, 157.

[279] "Cum Rudeç Popouich de Tribigne ... comparuit tamquam nuncius specialis voiuode Radosaui Paulouich ad hoc Ragusium missus per dictum voiuodam Radosaum ut patet per literam credentialem ipsius voiuode Radosaui in persona Rudezi predicti ad dominium Ragusii, que litera est hic affixa, contra et aduersus ser Benedictum Pe. de Gondola, dicens cum dictus ser Benedictus Pe. de

The Hungarian plans tailored along the meridian of Bosnia and the Despotate in the 1420s represented the ambition of the already threatened kingdom, which had to reach deeper into the Balkans to construct a defense against increasingly dangerous Ottoman attacks. Even when his foreign-political position in the Balkans was eroding and his power was waning, Sigismund did not lose sight of the plans for the coronation with the Bosnian crown. Sigismund's claim to "legitimate" possession of his southern neighbors, Bosnia and the Despotate, was not a reflection of Hungarian historical-legal reality, but the Luxembourger, even at the height of his power, fulfilled this surmountable medieval legal norm with his own sword. Although the Hungarians still posed a potential danger to Tvrtko's state, it was precisely their lack of power before the Ottomans that was the grain of attraction that once again favored the charismatic Luxembourger. On the other hand, the Despotate's relations with the Hungarians were friendly for more than two decades. In an era when Bosnian-Hungarian relations were only a shadow of what they used to be, the Buda court did not move its binoculars from Belgrade. Under the direction of Filippo de Scolaris, Sigismund sent assistance to Stefan during the Ottoman attacks in 1425, showing him the side of the world from which assistance could be expected.

Sigismund's plans for Bosnia and the Despotate at the time of strong Ottoman attacks were a natural continuation of Hungarian anti-Ottoman propaganda. For this purpose, the Buda court conducted negotiations with the Byzantine emperor, who at the time was the most threatened Christian ruler, and the Venetians, who had an interest in weakening or removing Ottoman positions in the European southeast. According to a Florentine report from the Buda court dated May 1426, the despot supported Sigismund during the Venetian-Hungarian war.[280] The ideal moment for the creation

Gondola sit debitor dicti voiuode Radosaui domini mey in libris vigintiquinque argenti. Ideo peto per vos dominum Rectorem et judices ... dictus Rudez sit verus actor et petitor pro dicto voiuoda Radosauo Paulouich contra Benedictum Pe. de Gondola predictum pro dicto argento" (23. 10. 1424) Div. Canc. XLIII, 42v.

[280] (10. 5. 1426) Franjo Rački, "Rukopisi tičući se južno-slovinske povjesti u arkivih srednje i dolnje Italije", *Rad JAZU* 18, Zagreb 1872, 236.

of a contract by which the Hungarians would be more closely tied to the land of the Lazarevićs occurred precisely when the despot was threatened by the Ottomans and agonized over the smooth implementation of succession. According to Constantine the Philosopher, Despot Stefan fell ill and declared his cousin Đurađ Branković his successor during his lifetime.[281] The last major state involvement of the despot Stefan was the agreement with the Hungarians on the recognition of Branković as his successor. Stefan was rightfully concerned about the reaction of the Ottomans following the succession decision. The agreement between Sigismund and Stefan on the acceptance of Đurađ as his successor was made in Tata in May 1426. By virtue of this act, the Despotate became an absolute vassal of Hungary.[282] Sigismund conditioned the acceptance of the new despot with a clause on the return of the places he had previously given to Despot Stefan, which included Belgrade, Mačva and Golubac, the hereditary right over the entire Despotate in the event that Branković died without male offspring, and the provision of Serbian troops in the event of an attack on Hungary. In accordance with the contract, Đurađ was to join the ranks of the Hungarian nobles as Stefan's heir.[283] The reasons for Sigismund's efforts were obvious, as the Despotate was an area through which Ottoman forces could penetrate towards southern Hungarian territory. It was due to the strengthening of diplomatic ties, as well as the acceptance of Stefan's will that would make the new Serbian despot both a Hungarian lord and a vassal, that Sigismund gained a foothold in a buffer zone that could serve as Hungary's outpost.

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[281] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 315-316. Ivica Prlender, "Sporazum u Tati 1426. godine i Žigmundovi obrambeni sustavi", *HZ* XLIV (1), Zagreb 1991, 32-33. Nenad Lemajić, "Ugovor u Tati između despota Stefana Lazarevića i Žigmunda Luksemburškog", *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta* 8, Istočno Sarajevo 2007, 444-448. Momčilo Spremić, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i gospodin Đurađ Branković", 64.

[282] Ljudevit Thallóczy, "Prilozi k objašnjenju izvora bosanske historije", *GZM* V, Sarajevo 1983, 181.

[283] Fejer, *Codex diplomaticvs* X/VI, 809-813. In more detail in: Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 344. Radonić, "Sporazum u Tati", 117-232. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 50. Momčilo Spremić, "Početak vladavine Đurđa Brankovića", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 220. Kalić, *Srbi u poznom srednjem veku*, 115, 141. Prlender, "Sporazum u Tati", 33-39. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 237. About the fate of Mačva after the death of the despot Stefan, see: Spremić, *Despot*, 109.

The Tata agreement is of particular importance to Bosnian circumstances as it pertains specifically to those areas that Đurađ should have returned to the Hungarians after taking power. It referred to populated areas and territories that Sigismund had previously ceded to Despot Stefan. Among others, the possessions west of the Drina are also mentioned: the fort *Thysnicza* (Tišnica) *in tenutis Ozaz* (Osat), the fort *Zahol* (Sokol) *in contrata Polanch*, the forts *Brodar* and *Zomzed* (Susjed) built by Herzog Hrvoje, and the lands of Dragiša and Hlap who died without heirs.[284] In the absence of comparative material from other sources, it is difficult to identify the places mentioned. The widespread use of the name Sokol to refer to high, hard-to-reach Bosnian forts makes it difficult to identify the two mentioned toponyms. Tišnica is listed in this contract as a fortified place in the Osat area. Based on some historical interpretations, this fort was associated with the Tišac county from the charter of King Tomaš to the logothete Stefan Ratković.[285] According to the charter of Despot Đurađ to the grand *čelnik* Radič from 1428/1429, the village with the name Tišica was also located in Mačva.[286] In earlier studies, Poljana was identified as a place in the vicinity of Tuzla with today's names Gornja and Donja Poljana,[287] that is, with Poljica in the nahiya of Donja Tuzla recorded in the censuses of 1519 and 1533.[288] Due to the frequency of toponyms based on Poljana and Poljica, as well as the lack of evidence for the rule of Herzog Hrvoje in the Tuzla area, the proposed framework is insufficient to represent

[284] "iam dictum regnum Rasciae omniaque et singula iura et iurisdictiones eiusdem, demtis, exemptis et penitus exclusis castro Thysnicza et pertinentis eiusdem in tenutis Ozaz habitis; item castro Zahol in contrata Polanch habito, in qua scilicet contrata quondam Dominus Hervoya, castra Brodar et Zomzed fecit aedificare; item teris et tenutis quondam Dragisa et Halap penes praedictum castrum Zokol habitis per defectum seminis eorumdem ad maiestatem nostram regiam devolutis" (1426) Fejer, *Codex diplomaticvs* X/6, 811. Spremić, "Početak vladavine Đurđa Brankovića", 220. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 116.

[285] (14. 10. 1458) Rački, "Prilozi", 156-158. Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, 343-345. Miloš Blagojević, "Krajišta srednjovekovne Srbije od 1371. do 1459. godine", *IG* 1-2, Beograd 1987, 41. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 116. Mišić, "Obnova Despotovine", 68.

[286] Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, 335. About the title *čelnik*, see: Miloš Blagojević, *Državna uprava u srpskim srednjovekovnim zemljama*, Javno preduzeće Službeni list SRJ, Beograd 2001, 223-245.

[287] Thálloczy, "Prilozi", 187.

[288] Adem Handžić, *Tuzla i njena okolina u XVI vijeku,* Svjetlost, Sarajevo 1975, 292-293. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 117.

the final location. While the Brodar and Susjed forts are not mentioned in later sources, it is generally accepted that they are located near Srebrenica because Herzog Hrvoje, who governed Srebrenica during the first decade of the 15th century, allegedly built them. It was evidently part of the Bosnian herzog's long-term plan to preserve an extremely important mining area. The situation is clear when it comes to the geographical designation Ozaz, which is actually read as Osat. This is a geographical area located east of Srebrenica. A striking feature of this document is that the Hungarian king does not mention the most valuable place by far, Srebrenica, although he was asking for far less valuable places in the vicinity of Srebrenica. Since the Bosnian attacks of 1411 and 1425 demonstrated the difficulties associated with holding Srebrenica, Sigismund believed that due to the configuration of possession, his vassal would be able to maintain his power in this mining center more easily.

After the Despotate, Hungarian diplomatic efforts were primarily focused on Bosnia. As it has already been noted that the Bosnian Kingdom, as well as the Serbian Despotate, were part of the Ottoman expansionist plans. Following the reconciliation between Tvrtko II and Sigismund in 1425, Bosnian-Hungarian diplomatic relations became more frequent. The Bosnian king was visited by Hungarian envoys in Jajce during the Ottoman attack on Bosnia in 1426, whose intentions are unknown. It is true that the preserved sources do not provide a detailed description of Bosnian-Hungarian relations, but there were certainly long correspondences regarding a certain contract between Bosnia and Hungary by the autumn of 1427.[289] At the beginning of September 1427, King Tvrtko II transferred the rights to the Bosnian crown to a distant relative of the Kotromanićs, Sigismund's father-in-law, Count Hermann II of Cili and his heirs, with a document issued in Bobovac, on the condition that Tvrtko II died without descendants. Hermann of Cili was identified as a person responsible for the quality of Bosnian-Hungarian relations.[290] The act of the Bosnian king vividly describes

[289] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 232-233.

[290] (2. 9. 1427) Fejer, *Codex diplomaticvs* X/6, 900-901. Ćorović, *Historija*, 435. Perojević, "Stjepan Tvrtko II. Tvrtković (opet)", 472. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 259-260. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 119. Ignacij Voje,

his situation at the time and illustrates the continuation of the policy pursued by the Bosnian rulers under difficult conditions.

With the last attempt to indirectly bring the Bosnian crown closer to the Hungarian sphere, that is, to secure the Bosnian Kingdom for his father-in-law Hermann, the experienced Luxembourger showed his lack of faith in the history in which he had been the main actor. Tvrtko's agreement to hand over the Bosnian crown to the Counts of Cili represented a strategy to gain the favor of the Hungarians in fear of the Ottomans. Bosnian kings and nobles did not even contemplate handing over the Bosnian crown to an individual from outside Bosnia.

The Despotate found itself at the center of the Balkan political scene in the middle of 1427. At the end of July, the Ragusans wrote to Sigismund about the death of his vassal and the coming to power of Stefan's cousin Đurađ Branković.[291] According to the Tronoša Chronicle, shortly before his death, after the miners' rebellion in Srebrenica in 1427, Despot Stefan Lazarević married the daughter of the Ban of Upper Bosnia *Tverdko*.[292] Even though these statements are undoubtedly incorrect interpretations, this information provides an interesting insight into the past of these areas as seen at the end of the 18th century. The death of the despot is evidenced by an in-

"Odnos Celjskih grofova prema političkim prilikama u Bosni i Hercegovini u XV vijeku", in: *Srednjovjekovna Bosna i Evropska kultura*, Izdanja Muzeja grada Zenice III, Zenica 1973, 57. Peter Štih, "Celjski grofje kot dediči bosanske krone-Listina bosanskega kralja Tvrtka II Kotromanića za celjskega grofa Hermana II. iz leta 1427", in: *Med srednjo Evropo in Sredozemljem-Vojetov zbornik*, Ljubljana 2006, 79-103. Pejo Ćošković, "Fridrih II Celjski kao pretendent na bosansko prijestolje", *Prilozi* 35, Sarajevo 2006, 14. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 233-234.

291 (31. 7. 1427) Lett. di Lev. IX, 28. Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 324. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 351. Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*, 89. In early May 1427, a Ragusan physician was staying with Despot Stefan. (6. 5. 1427) Cons. Minus IV, 87v. By early August, the Ragusan authorities were reaching out to Đurađ. (1. 8. 1427) (7. 8. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 31v, 32v. Đurađ Branković received an insignia of a despot's title from Byzantium on the same principle as Stefan. The Byzantine Emperor John VIII Palaiologos sent Georgi Philanthropenos to the Despotate in the summer of 1429. Radonić, "Sporazum u Tati", 127. Ferjančić, *Despoti u Vizantiji*, 188-189. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 342. Spremić, *Despot*, 136-137.

292 Dragoslav Stranjaković, "Podaci za bosansku istoriju po srpskim rodoslovima i letopisima", *Narodne Starine* XI, Zagreb 1932, 6.

scription on a stone from the village of Drvenglava, in which Despot Stefan is titled as **деспоть Стефань сынь кнеза Лазар и по ого прѣставлєн мислосью божїєю бїхъ господин вьсѣмь Срблиємь и Подѫнавїю и Посавїю и честьи Угрьскїѣ земли и босьнскїѣ**.[293] A similar title is mentioned in the Annals of Sečenica, which mentions that he had power in Bosnia as well.[294] According to a document dated around 1426, Despot Stefan held many honors of the Bosnian state.[295] It is fairly certain that the phrase about Bosnian honors in Stefan's title refers to the narrow territory along the Drina that the Serbian despot received from Sigismund and which previously belonged to Bosnia.

After the death of Despot Stefan, the Tata agreement formally came into effect. This sparked the interest of the surrounding states. At the time of the despot's death, Sigismund was in Wallachia. Then he headed to the Despotate to take the possessions that were due to him in accordance with the agreement. Without major problems, the Hungarian king came into possession of Belgrade in October 1427 at the latest, where he recognized the new despot, Đurađ Branković, right after Đurađ took the oath of allegiance to him.[296] During the surrender of Golubac, there were disagreements with the local commander, a certain Jeremija, who tried to obtain monetary compensation for the surrender of the fort, and when the Hungarians refused, Jeremija handed Golubac over to the Ottomans. The Hungarians remained determined to hold onto Golubac, and in April 1428 they attacked the fort, only to be defeated by the Ottomans and forced to give up this important strategic place.[297] At the beginning of 1427, Ottoman forces penetrated the Despotate's southern borders and besieged Novo Brdo. Despite several months of efforts, the Ottomans were unable to capture the

[293] Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi* I, SKA, Beograd 1902, 77-78.

[294] Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 210.

[295] Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, 76.

[296] Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 73, 74-76. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 351. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 344. Radonić, "Sporazum u Tati", 199. Spremić, *Despot*, 111. Aleksandar Krstić, "Kralj Žigmund u Borči, ili kada je i kako Beograd predat Ugrima 1427. godine?", *IČ* LXI, Beograd 2012, 115-127.

[297] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 54-55.

most important mine in the Balkans.[298] In September and November 1427, the Ragusans reported to Sigismund that their merchants on the despot's territory were in a difficult situation. The Ragusan letter to Sigismund from December 1427 indicates that Novo Brdo was still under siege. Ragusan merchants, who were said to have been held captive for months, also happened to be there.[299] Sigismund sent help to Ragusa in November 1427 in response to Ragusa's pleas to the Buda court. According to the Ragusan chronicler Orbini, the Hungarian army played an important role against the Ottomans in the Despotate during this period.[300] At the time, the Serbian despot was looking for a way through which he could make peace with the Ottomans and provide his state with a much-needed respite. It seems that the agreement between Despot Đurađ and Sultan Murad II was reached in May 1428 at the latest. By accepting the onerous provisions of the peace agreement, according to which he committed to paying a substantial tribute of 50,000 ducats annually, sending an additional army under the leadership of one of his sons at the sultan's invitation, Đurađ demonstrated the difficult position that befell him during the Ottoman attacks. In addition to large monetary expenditures, the Despotate also emerged from the conflict with the Ottomans territorially diminished, because the important centers of Niš, Kruševac and Stalać came under the sultan's rule.[301] The Ottoman attacks on the Despotate of 1427 also left consequences on the territory of Bosnia. It is certain that Bosnian nobles were preparing for a potential Ottoman invasion through the territory of the Despotate in the middle of 1427, despite a kind of gap in the sources regarding Bosnian-Ottoman relations in those years. As a result of previous experiences, when the Ottomans ravaged his areas after attacking the Despotate, Duke Vukašin Zlatonosović

[298] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 355. Dinić, "Novo Brdo", 248. Kalić, "Doba prividnog mira", 216. Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi", 32. Spremić, *Despot*, 100.

[299] (26. 9. 1427) (8. 11. 1427) (9. 12. 1427) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 326-327, 327-328, 329-330. Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*, 89.

[300] Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 108.

[301] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 355. Miloš Blagojević, "Istočna granica Despotovine od 1428. do 1439. godine", *IG* 1-2, Beograd 1995, 26-35.

rushed to secure weapons from the Ragusans in early July 1427, but did not succeed until the spring of the following year.[302] At the same time, the Ragusan authorities approved the purchase and export of arms to Despot Đurađ.[303] The Ragusans wrote to their suzerain in December 1427 that they were unable to get in touch with their merchants in the Despotate because the roads in Bosnia were cut off.[304] As it can be seen from the instructions given to the Ragusan envoys, there were movements of the Ottoman army in Bosnia at the beginning of 1428. Mid-March 1428, the Ragusan authorities instructed their envoy at the Bosnian king's court to send information about the Ottoman army in Bosnia.[305] Considering Ragusa's lack of information, it appears that there were no significant combat activities in Bosnia during 1428 and 1429. However, the data from June to September 1430, according to which Tvrtko II intended to send silver to Venice through the Ragusans in exchange for 30 thousand ducats with which he would buy his fortresses from the Ottomans, indicates a different framework of Ottoman activities at the time when the Despotate became the sultan's tributary.[306] In the context of these activities, it is important to note that the first record regarding the Bosnian king's payment of annual tribute to the Ottomans dates back to November 1428.[307]

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[302] "de offerendo et concedendo Volcassino Slatonosovich hic in Ragusio libras trecentas salnitri exportandi quo voluint" (8. 7. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 32v. (9. 4. 1428) Ibid., 52v.

[303] "de dando libertatem officialibus armamenti quod dare debeant de armamento comunis pro domino Georgio Volchovich clippeorum quindecim duas balistas cum duobus mulinellis et quattuor balistas cum quatuor crochis, capsam unam plenam veretonibus et sex macios spagi" (30. 8. 1427) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 202.

[304] "Nam de reliquis conciuibus nostris usque adeo uenire non possent cum eorum mercantiis ad ciuitatem illam, quod nec uacui cursores litteras deferre queant ad obsessos ciues nostros, neque inde ad nos remeare propter itinera, que rupta sunt tam per Bossnam, quam per Sclauoniam et Albaniam" (9. 12. 1427) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 330. Radonić, *Akta i povelje* I/1, 280. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 35.

[305] (18. 3. 1428) Lett. di Lev. X, 84.

[306] Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, "Prilog pitanju ranih bosansko-turskih odnosa", *Godišnjak Društva istoričara BiH* XI (1960), Sarajevo 1962, 260-253.

[307] Kovačević-Kojić, "Prilog", 259. See the results of the latest research on this issue in: Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 288-292.

Ottoman successes in the Despotate meant long-term problems for the Bosnian state. The established Ottoman positions in the state of Đurađ Branković represented a corridor through which Ottoman detachments threatened the Bosnian state in the following decades. Ragusans wisely observed the situation and attempted to explain it to the Bosnian dukes, Sandalj and Radoslav, who had grown closer to the Ottomans at this time. Ragusan letters from the beginning of May 1429 highlight the treachery and cunning of Ishak-bey, who intended to create discord among the Bosnian nobles in order to defeat them more easily. Several examples from Greece, Bulgaria and the Despotate were used to illustrate the Ottoman conquest policy, which followed the same principle as the Ottomans attempted to implement in Bosnia.[308] In the 1420s, the coordinated actions of powerful neighbors towards Bosnia and the Despotate resulted in the formation of a specific foreign policy between the Hungarian and Ottoman spheres of interest. Due to Hungarian aspirations to secure their own territory and Ottoman conquests, the two independent neighbors, the Kingdom and the Despotate, endured difficult conditions in the following decades.

[308] "E cosi anno facto tra li imperadori di Bulgaria et per simile i lo Regno di Rassa. E cosi se ingegnato et ignenano di fare in Bosna. Et vegiando lo grande amore et concordia che anno li signori di Bosna con Ragusa et che siando loro aperta la via del mare per la dicta cita de Ragusa" (2. 5. 1429) Lett. di Lev. X, 59. A letter with similar content was sent to Sandalj on the same day. Ibid., 57v-58v.

III

THE AGE OF CONFLICT (1430–1454)

III
THE AGE OF CONFLICT (1430–1454)

In the whirlwind of the Konavle War (1430–1433)

In the middle of 1430, a war broke out between Duke Radoslav Pavlović and Ragusa, in which the neighboring states also played a significant role. After several decades of efforts, the Ragusans gained possession of Konavle. They acquired one part from Sandalj Hranić in 1419, and the other from Radoslav Pavlović, it was a process that lasted until the end of 1426.[309] The Ragusans achieved their ambition to expand their territory by purchasing Konavle county. However, this acquisition quickly became the cause of conflict between Ragusa and Duke Radoslav Pavlović.

Disputes between Duke Radoslav and Ragusa began in October 1429 when Radoslav's envoys arrived in Ragusa and accused the duke's subjects of fleeing to the neighboring Ragusan territory. Radoslav captured several Ragusan merchants and robbed a caravan at the beginning of October 1429.[310] That same month, the Ragusan authorities sent envoys with gifts to the Bosnian duke in an effort to smooth things over.[311] Nevertheless, since the negotiations failed to yield any results, the Ragusans suspended trade

[309] On the sale of Konavle to Ragusa in 1419 and 1426, see: Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 293- 301, 600-601, 607-615. Radoslav Grujić, *Konavli pod raznim gospodarima od XII do XV veka*, Spomenik SKA LXVI, Beograd-Zemun 1926, 23. Pavo Živković, "Učešće bosanske vlastele u diobi Konavala", *Prilozi* XV/16, Sarajevo 1979, 182. Pavo Živković, "Ustupanje Konavala Dubrovčanima", in: *Konavle u prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti* 1, Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku, Dubrovnik 1998, 77-99. Esad Kurtović, "Motivi Sandaljeve prodaje Konavala", *Anali* 38, Dubrovnik 2000, 107. Anto Babić, "Tradicija i historijsko pravo u odnosima Bosne i Dubrovnika u srednjem vijeku", *BF* III/12, Sarajevo 2000, 245.

[310] (8. 10. 1429) Cons. Rog. IV, 119.

[311] (27. 10. 1429) Cons. Rog. IV, 123v. Ćiro Truhelka, "Konavoski rat (1430-1433)-Historička studija po spomenicima dubrovačke arkive", *GZM* XXIX, Sarajevo 1917, 149. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 140.

through Pavlović's territory.[312] Despite the fact that a conflict had not yet been initiated, the atmosphere between these individuals was very negative.

To facilitate easier defense against a potential attack, the Ragusans voted, mid-November 1429, to carry out works on the construction of fortifications and the digging of canals around Cavtat, effectively turning the town into an island.[313] As a result of this event, Radoslav's envoys were able to submit to the Ragusans another request which the authorities were unable to fulfill. In mid-April 1430, Radoslav's envoys arrived in Ragusa, where they pointed out that the duke was against the fortification, digging and building of Cavtat, because he gave land to the Republic, but did not allow the building of towns on that territory. Furthermore, the envoys demanded payment of interest on the duke's money invested in profits for the previous year or payment of the entire principal amount.[314] The Ragusans rejected all these requests, considering them groundless for several reasons.[315]

The rejection of Radoslav's demands by the Ragusan authorities served the Bosnian duke as justification for pre-planned military actions. Radoslav authorized his subjects to attack Konavle shortly after the envoys returned from Ragusa. In turn, the Ragusans appointed nobleman Ivan Zrieva as commander of their detachments. He gathered approximately 400 people and headed for Konavle. The armies clashed in Ljuta, during which the Ragusans were defeated, while Zrieva and two Ragusans were killed.[316]

The Ragusans had to send envoys to all sides within a short period of time in order to inform the neighboring rulers and their suzerain of the unpleasant events. After several letters of protest that were sent to the court of Pavlović, which had no effect on the duke, the authorities decided to send envoys to Tvrtko II, Sandalj Hranić and Grgur Nikolić.[317] Having explained

[312] (27. 10. 1429) Cons. Rog. IV, 123v. Kovačević, *Trgovina*, 50.

[313] Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 297.

[314] (30. 4. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 113v. Petar Matković, "Prilozi k trgovačko-političkoj istoriji dubrovačke republike", *Rad* JAZU I, Zagreb 1869, 232. Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 150.

[315] (11. 2. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 132v.

[316] Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 151.

[317] (23. 4. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 145. (30. 4. 1431) Lett. di Lev. X, 111-113v.

the situation to Tvrtko II and Sandalj, the Ragusan envoys presented a plan to attack Duke Radoslav.[318] On the same day, when the envoys traveled to the courts of the Bosnian rulers, the Ragusans also sent their envoys to their suzerain, King Sigismund, to Hungary. The envoys presented the situation at the Buda court and requested that Sigismund dispatch his army to the border area with the fortress of Srebrenik in Usora, which would allow an attack on Radoslav's territory. They asked Sigismund to approach Despot Đurađ, the Bosnian king, and Duke Sandalj, who, according to them, were not on good terms with Pavlović regarding the Konavle issue.[319] There is no doubt that Despot Đurađ stood out, in that the Ragusans relied on him as Sigismund's vassal to respond to the Hungarian king's call. From these first diplomatic steps, the Ragusans sought to involve Despot Đurađ in the Konavle War both due to their shared suzerain and because of the despot's favorable relationship with the Ottomans, whose vassal at the time was Duke Radoslav. They sent letters through envoy Angelinus de Maxi, among others, to the Srebrenica ban Matko Talovac, to whom they mentioned that they expected their *dominus* to send a letter to the Serbian despot as well.[320] Envoys from Sigismund's court did not convey any good news to the Ragusans, nor did Talovac take the expected steps. As a result, they wrote to Sigismund again in mid-May 1430, and requested him to once more urge Matko Talovac to intervene militarily and send envoys to Đurađ, Tvrtko and Sandalj.[321] They also sent Ban

[318] (30. 4. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 111-113, 113-116. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 141. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 301.

[319] "Credimus namque etiam mittendo nuntios suos maiestatis vestra dispoto Georgio, regi Bosne et voiuode Sandagl, qui non multum amicantur dicto Radossauo, quod nolint tollerare ut iste Radosauus debeat damnis huius ciuitatis maiestatis vestre instare vel aliter exponentes, prout melius corona imperii vestre maiestati his et aliis arduentioribus negociis cognoscit pertinere" (30. 4. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 117v. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 337.

[320] "Ex quibus gentibus obtinendis prius viso quomodo dominus noster procedere intendet, postea velit tres literas impetrate, videlicet, domino dispoto Georgio unam, regi Bosne alteram et voiuode Sandagl terciam. Qui omnes, ut speramus, tollerare nolent ut iste Radossavus damnis huius nostre patrie debeat incumbere." (30. 4. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 118v. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 340.

[321] "Credimus eciam serenissime princeps quod destinante maiestate vestra suos nuntios dispotho Georgio, regi Bosne et voivode Sandagl, querelantes de prefatis, contra nos seruos suos fidelissimos tam crudeliter per eundem Radossavum ausis hoc nolent tollerare" (11. 5. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 130. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 342.

Talovac a letter with similar content.[322] At the end of May, the Ragusans addressed Despot Đurađ independently.[323] Apparently, the Ragusans expected more significant support from Ban Talovac and Despot Đurađ than from the Bosnian king and nobles, which is quite understandable, if the context of the conflict is taken into account. Sigismund's reluctance to support the Ragusans was conditioned by the peaceful relations between the Hungarians and the Ottomans at the time.

Along with sending envoys to neighboring states, the Ragusans began to systematically recruit military detachments from Italy, as well as from the immediate surroundings. Neighboring nobles offered their military services to the Republic as early as May 1430. Therefore, the Ragusans reached out to their neighbor's sovereign Sandalj.[324] There have been a number of Drijeva residents who have been recruited into the mercenary service since the first conflict.[325] In a letter dated June 1430, they wrote to Sandalj that among their mercenaries was a small number of Venetian subjects and that there were many more from Zeta, from the territory of Despot Đurađ, who allowed the hiring of mercenaries from this area.[326] Activities related to the recruitment of mercenaries from the territory of Despot Đurađ in Zeta were started by

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[322] "Et ultra nuntios pro serenisimum dominum nostrum mittendo domino dispotho, domino Regi Bosne, et voiuode Sandalg" (11. 5. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 130v.

[323] "de elligendo tres nobiles officiales qui forment et formatam portent ad presens consilium responsionem dandam literis dispoth Sclauonie lectis in presenti consilio" (25. 5. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 165.

[324] (30. 4. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 115-115v. Mihailo Dinić, *Humsko-trebinjska vlastela*, SANU, Beograd 1967, 10.

[325] "possendi mittere Narentum pro arceriis triginta asoldandis pro yperperis quinque ad rationem mensis cuilibet dandis et duobus caporalibus in ipsis duplum et expensibus de pluri" (23. 6. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 183v. "de dando istis de Narento quod tempore quo servierunt in nostris exercitibus et qui ire volunt domum ducatos duos auri pro quolibet et duplum caporali" (19. 7. 1430) Ibid., 213v. "de acceptando ad nostrum stipendium circa XX de Narento cum Baba, eorum caporalium, et cum salario consueto" (12. 8. 1430) Ibid., 216v. Đuro Tošić, *Trg Drijeva u srednjem vijeku*, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo 1987, 130.

[326] "Ma tutti li altri son homeni et del paese del dispoth et ogni dessi Albanesi" (10. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 153. Vladimir Ćorović, "Despot Đurađ Branković prema konavoskom ratu", *Glas* SKA 90, Beograd 1923, 27-28. About the payments to Ragusan mercenaries during 1430 and 1431, see: Mihailo Dinić, "Jedna dubrovačka arhivska knjiga petnaestog veka", *IČ* XII-XIII, Beograd 1963, 25.

the Ragusans from the beginning of June 1430. To the greatest extent, the despot's subjects were taken from Luštica, Bar and Mataguz, while there was also a discussion about taking Paštrovićs into mercenary service.[327] In the summer of 1430, Ragusan authorities hired mercenaries from the despot's territory as needed to defend their possessions.[328] The decision to extend the service of these mercenaries was made in June.[329] The despot's mercenaries participated in the battle near Trebinje in early June, when the Ragusans and the army of Duke Radoslav engaged in combat.[330] Ragusan authorities

[327] "quia possint mittere ad conducendo a ducentum usque 300 stipendiariis Antibaranis et Albanensibus dando cuilibet ipsorum de stipendio ab yperperis sex infra et expensis oriis et caporalibus duplum" (4. 6. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 170v. "de donando Albanensibus de Lustiza qui hic fuerunt ad nostra stipendia et recedere volunt" (7. 6. 1430) Ibid., 173. "de sequendo quod Zagnus Petri debeat ire pro Albanensibus qui veniant ad nostra stipendia" (7. 6. 1430) Ibid., 173v. "de accipiendo et rescribendo ad nostra stipendia Albanenses qui compleuerunt nunc mensem unum sui stipendii" (10. 6. 1430) Ibid., 176. "de donando istis Albanenses Pastrouich qui acceperunt coedium" The second proposal was adopted: "de non donando" (15. 6. 1430) Ibid., 179. "de accipiendo ad nostra stipendia solita ex hominibus de Gluistiza"; "de conducendo ex dictis de Liustiza a centum infra" (18. 6. 1430) Ibid., 180v. "refirmandi ad stipendia nostra illos Albanenses qui ino finierunt eorum terminum et habent arma, silicet, qui armati sunt dando eis de pluri ultra soldum seu stipendium quod hactenus huius ducatis auri ducentis infra" (19. 6. 1430) Ibid., 181. "scribendi Johanni Petri Zupan quod conducere possit et debat ad stipendia nostra pedites cum armas circa centum ex illis de Mataguxi et de Chioti et vel de Antibaro, dando eis ad rationem mensis pro quolibet ad ducatos auri tres et a se ipsis faciant expensas" The second proposal was adopted: "quod ut supra conducere debeat dando ut supra pro quolibet ad ducatos tres auri cum dimidio et quod sibi a se ipsis expensas faciant" (19. 6. 1430) Ibid.

[328] "quia in aiuto et suffragio nostrorum de Canali possint mittere illos 70 de Liustiza et Narente habentes sipendium qui presentialiter sunt in Breno et alios centum triginta ex campo Vergati qui soldum habunt usque ad completum numerum CC^{orum} et de pluri usque centum hominibus infra ex illis qui stipendium non habunt" (3. 7. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 189. "possendi ad stipendium nostrum conducere et accipere a ducentorum Albanensibus infra vel circha existis qui nouiter venerunt" (5. 7. 1430) Ibid., 190. "de prouidendo Albanensesibus Matagusis qui nouiter venerent" (10. 7. 1430) Ibid., 193. "Item quod possint expendere pro mittendo Albanenses qui fuerunt eorum stipendia ad ipsorum domos quantum fuerit opportunum" (24. 7. 1430) Cons. Minus V, 48.

[329] "quod praticando in retinendis ad stipendium nostrum illos Albanenses qui supra ad campum Vergati sunt" (23. 6. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 183.

[330] "che quello ano fatto contra suo saper et volere, et anche ali altri suoi sia ad exemple et non pesumere cusi contra sua volunta contra li nostri li deti Vlachi son questi Mirilouich, Bormasi, Podzergni, Plische, Bobani. Per Dio gratiam li nostri campi refortifichemo de gente Albanese che sun venuti et altri et anche fortificaremo de gente Latine da pie et da caualli pro li quali abiamo mandato" (7. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 148v.

determined at the end of August that they do not currently require these mercenaries, who had been based in Konavle up to that point.[331]

As early as May 1430, Duke Sandalj initiated diplomatic relations with Pavlović, but without much success.[332] At the end of May, Ragusans wrote to the envoys at Sandalj's and Tvrtko's courts proposing that an alliance or a coalition be formed with a clear framework for its participants. However, Sandalj and Tvrtko remained reserved and uncertain about these plans, but the Ragusans encouraged them in every way they could. It was thus emphasized at Sandalj's court that the king was interested in the alliance, and vice versa, which had a profound effect on them.[333] Each of the parties had strictly defined conditions that the others had to comply with in order for the alliance to be formed at all. Thus, it was extremely important for Sandalj to ensure the neutrality of the Ottomans, from whom he had to obtain permission to attack their vassal Radoslav. Ragusans attempted to resolve this issue by utilizing Sigismund's good relations with the Ottomans and preparing the ground for the sultan through his envoys.[334] Early in June 1430, the Ragusans informed the Bosnian king and Duke Sandalj of the important fact that the son of Despot Đurađ had returned home after serving on the side of the sultan in the war.[335] Branković's connection with the sultan's court represented a lever through which the Ragusans sought to challenge Pavlović's activities at the Porte. Conversely, the Serbian despot's ties with the sultan opened the door for him to participate in the Konavle issue.

Over the course of the following days, the Bosnian king became increasingly involved in the Ragusan issue. Tvrtko II informed the Ragusans, through envoy Nicola Resti, that Radoslav had sent his men to the Porte in

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[331] "de refirmando ad soldum nostrum soldum pro uno mense decem Albanensis qui sunt in Canali". The second proposal was adopted: "de non refirmando" (23. 8. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 223.

[332] (9. 5. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 127v.

[333] (13. 5. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 131v-132.

[334] (13. 5. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 133v.

[335] "El fiolo de despothi Zorzi e ritornato dal Turcho e da luy amoreuelmente e sta ben vezuto e spazato e di molti doni honorato." (3. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 144v. "Et a lassato da luy ritornar il fiol del signor Zorzi dispoth di Sclauonia honorado assai con doni" (3. 6. 1430) Ibid., 146.

order to obtain help and support.[336] After some time, the Ragusans discovered that the diplomats at the Porte had taken three thousand ducats from Radoslav's envoys as bribes, and after a period of time they announced that they could not plead for his cause, because the sultan was at peace with Sigismund and did not want to violate relations between these two states.[337] Furthermore, Radoslav failed in his efforts to have his envoys stop by Ishak-bey on their way back from the sultan and persuade him to assist him in the fight against the Ragusans.[338] During the early months of June 1430, the Bosnian king began diplomatic efforts to reconcile Pavlović and Ragusa. Even though the Bosnian duke expressed his willingness to reconcile, the Ragusans already felt they could gain much more by returning to the positions they held at the beginning of the war.[339] In June 1430, there was a discussion regarding the formation of an alliance. As of the beginning of June, correspondence was conducted between Tvrtko II and Sandalj in order to reach an agreement regarding the alliance.[340] It seemed that the Ragusans would finally succeed in their ambitions to bring the most important member, Tvrtko II, into the alliance.

King Sigismund sent his envoy Stephano to the Porte in the middle of June. On his journey, the Hungarian envoy had been instructed to stop by Despot Đurađ, to whom he recommended cooperation with the Ottomans in favor of the Ragusans.[341] Sigismund's demands were prompted by the fact that the despot's eldest son, Grgur, was at the time engaged in a war

[336] (3. 6. 1430) (8. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 143v-144, 149v. Đuro Tošić, "Ostoja Paštrović-Tragom jednog kontroverznog diplomate", *Istraživanja* 20, Novi Sad 2009, 257-266.

[337] Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 165.

[338] Stjepan Bogčinić, a man in the service of Vukac Hranić, reports about it to the king. (18. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 160v.

[339] Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 166. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 144.

[340] (10. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 151v-152.

[341] "Et per quello etiamdio siamo auisati dal conte Mattio dalo ambassador nostro appresso nostro signor Re i quali questo medemo ne scriuenno esso nostro signor Re per lo simile a comesso alli ambassadori del signor Zorzo dispot i quali si ritrouarno di la che per sua parte debiano dire e fare chel signor dispot si debia mouere alili danni et offesse a vendeta del detto Radossauo quanto il sa et puo" (18. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 161.

with the Ottomans against the Venetians in Zeta. A day earlier, the Ragusans were trying to keep their potential allies informed. A decision was made to send letters to the Bosnian king, Sandalj, the despot, the Ragusan merchants in the Despotate and the Hungarian envoys who were on their way to Sultan Murad II's court.[342] In mid-June, Ragusans wrote to the envoy at the court of the Bosnian king regarding the good relations between the Serbian despot and Ishak-Bey.[343] When the Ragusans requested the sovereign to alert the despot, they became aware that it would have a direct effect on Sandalj's mood. For this reason, the Ragusans made use of every good piece of information available from Đurađ to present it to Sandalj as a despot's effort on their side. The Hungarian envoys should have attempted to resolve these disputes between the sultan and the Hungarian king, since as rulers they were recognized as their sovereigns by the conflicting parties. Sigismund sent envoys to King Tvrtko and Duke Sandalj, headed by Ban Paulo Bisseno.[344] When the Ragusan authorities learned that a Hungarian envoy had been sent to the Ottoman Porte, they instructed their merchants in Novo Brdo to send either Nikola Živolinović or Živko Đurković with him. Their mission was to inform the Hungarian envoy in detail about the conflict with Radoslav and persuade him to request that the sultan launch a military campaign against Radoslav, and to order through his man the participation of Tvrtko II, Sandalj, Despot Đurađ, and all the Bosnian nobles

[342] "S. Marinus de Resti, s. Nicola de Poza, s. Johanes de Goze el. f. officiales ad formando et formatas portando in Consilium Rogatorum literas scribendas ambasiatam ad regem Bosne, ad Sandagl et mercatoribus in Sclavonia et ambasiatoribus dominii nostri qui sunt ad Teucrum" (17. 6. 1430) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 245.

[343] "de comittendo suprascriptis nobilibus elligendis ad responsionem ambassatori nostri ad regem Bosne et ad Sanalis quia scribere debeant et comittere mercatoribus nostris Sclauonie ubi et de quibus sibi videbitur pro literis et seu nuntio scribendis et mittendo ad Portam imperatoris Teucrorum ad ambassiatorum domini nostri regis Ungarie cui ambassiatores domini nostri qui erit ad Turcum fieri debeant promissiones de quibus videbitur" (17. 6. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 180v. "Et per lo simile di quello aveti avuto da Ivan Lovrinzich, tanto sopra lo venir de Ysach e del fiol del dispoth com oste per aver le terre et cita date ad esso dispoth quanto supra la intencion del Re et liberta data alli suoi ambassadori a promettere simonia etc" (18. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 160v.

[344] (18. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 161.

in this campaign.[345] Ragusans also wrote to Matko Talovac in the middle of June. In their request, he was asked to address the Hungarian envoy at the Porte to arrange for the sultan's envoy to be sent, who would coordinate the campaign against Radoslav under the direction of the Bosnian king, the nobility, and the Serbian despot. In this same letter, they also attempted to convince Despot Đurađ to send an envoy to the sultan.[346] A similar letter was sent by the Ragusans to their envoy at the court of the Hungarian king.[347] Marginalization of Pavlović's influence on the Ottomans, from Ragusa's point of view, was supposed to be achieved through joint efforts of Hungarian and Serbian diplomacy, with the assistance of the Bosnian king and nobility.[348]

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[345] "E avanti, che questo voivoda turcho vada con hoste contra Radossav ditto procurati de aver uno schiavo de la corte del Turcho, el qual subito vada per parte del dito Amorat al re di Bosna, a voivoda Sandal e a tuti i baroni de Bosna, e per lo simele al dispotho Zorzi comandando a zascun d essi, che la lor hoste e gente mandano a desfazione del detto Radossav e del sue tenute" (18. 6. 1430) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 343-346.

[346] "in missione oratorum serenissimi domini nostri ad Omorat dominum Teucrorum ad Regem Bosne et ceteros procereres eiusdem necnon ad dispotum Georgium … ducere sclavum unum ex illis curie dicti domini Teucrorum. Qui sclavus veniat mandatumque ex parte domini sui faciat regi ac proceribus Bosne ac dispotho Georgio quod gentes suas ad exterminum et debellationem dicti Radossaui et ciuitatis suarum penitus mittere debeant [164] … Serenissimus dominus noster comittat domino despotho Georgio mittere velit ad portam Amorat causa obstandi tali petitioni ambassiatori Radossaui quam gentes illas contra nos requisitas vale ac obtinere quidem ultra presentiam ambasiatorum domini nostri ad ipsum Amorat valde et nuncii dicti despothi prodesse poterunt lui domino despoth ut credimus libenter hoc faciret pro bono statu suo" (20. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 164.

[347] "necnon nostro inspexius intellectu provisiones laudables inchoatas iu mittendo ambassiatorem ad Omorat dominum Teucrorum, regem Bosne, magnificum Sandagl ac ad dispotum Georgium et alia utilia pertractata, secundum in ipsis clementissimis literis seriosius continetur" (20. 6. 1430) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 347.

[348] "Ancora li piaqua procurar chel sia scritto una lettera per lo signor nostro alo suo ambassador Stefano chi e al Turcho chel tegna modo et auer uno schiauo de quelli de la corte del Turcho, che con luy vegna a far comandamento al Re e baroni di Bosna e al despothi Zorzi che lor mandano le sue gente a ruina e desfation de Radossauo e sue citade. Anchor perche nuy sauemo de fermo Radossauo auer mandato sui ambassiadori [165v] ala Porta del Turcho per obtegnir de auer fente e quelle contra de nui mandar debiati per questo procurar con lo signor nostro siando in lo Regname de Ungaria e col detto conte che per parte de la sacratissima maiesta se debia scriuer al dispothi Zorzi che lui manda suo messo a la porta del imperator Turcho el qual debia opponer e contradir che li detti ambassiatori de Radossau non possano obtegnir tal gente contra nuy [165v]" (20. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 165-165v.

The Bosnian king was still uninterested in joining an alliance in which foreign forces would be involved. Therefore, Sandalj attempted to form an alliance with the Ragusans without the involvement of King Tvrtko. This assessment was based on a calculation in which 70 thousand ducats would have been sufficient to purchase Duke Radoslav's possession from the sultan. The Ragusans would have to pay 50 thousand ducats and he would have to pay 20 thousand ducats.[349] A compensation structure of this nature did not sit well with the Ragusans, primarily due to the exclusion of the Bosnian king. Ragusans, as proponents, wished for King Tvrtko, who was already planning to spend 40 thousand ducats for these endeavors, to provide that amount, while they would contribute 20,000, and Duke Sandalj 10,000 ducats.[350] The Bosnian king tried to exclude Ragusa as a foreign party from the purchase of Pavlović's territories, he mentioned to envoy Resti that he and Sandalj were rich enough to bear the costs of the alliance and that there was no need for the Ragusans to spend money on it. Resti was ordered to make a pledge to ensure that the Ragusans would not be forced out of the alliance, since without payment they would not be able to demand the cession of the border territories of Pavlović's possessions.[351] Clearly, King Tvrtko hesitated again, which left an impact on the alliance as well. The Ragusans were in a good position with Sandalj regarding the alliance at the beginning of July. At that time, *la poueglia della liga et unione*[352] was mentioned, and seven days later everything was agreed upon between these two allies regarding the alliance.[353]

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[349] At that time, the Ragusan authorities also had information that the king had decided to offer the sultan 40,000 ducats for ransom, which was considered an insufficient amount. Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 168.

[350] (20. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 167.

[351] (7. 7. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 177v.

[352] (1. 7. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 173v-175.

[353] "Et per lo informarui de la poueglia vi dicemo che come per nostre douete auer ricepute vedereti rechiedemo da voiuoda che debia far mettere in nota essa poueglia a çio che la possiamo vedere et examinare. Si che siando per essa posta in nota et mandata da noi et per noi veduta et examinata che sia in bona forma" (7. 7. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 178.

At the same time as negotiating with the Bosnian King and Sandalj over the alliance, the Ragusans were working on expanding the alliance. In late June of 1430, they wrote to their envoy at Sandalj's court not to give up on including Zlatonosović even though it would be harder to form the alliance under those circumstances. In the same instructions, they emphasized that they also counted on Despot Đurađ, but the envoy was not supposed to mention this fact to Sandalj.[354] A few days later, Despot Đurađ informed the Ragusans that he had sent a letter to Duke Radoslav, rebuking him for attacking the Ragusan territory and planning to influence Ishak-bey in favor of the Republic, on the orders of the Hungarian King. The Ragusans learned that the Hungarian envoys sent to the sultan had stayed at the despot's court before continuing their journey.[355] At the end of June, the Ragusans wrote to Sandalj that they had established communication with the Serbian despot, who was in good spirits. News from the Zeta front, according to which the despot's son Grgur had successfully fought alongside Ishak-bey, gave the Ragusans hope.[356] Although the framework of the alliance with Sandalj was seemingly agreed upon during July of 1430, Vukašin Zlatonosović still remained an equal participant. In mid-July, he had diplomatic

[354] "per quelllo chel dice molto ben saria che pigliassimo con noi Vocassin li direte che a noi per assai e lo Re e la magnificentia sua e quanti piu se pigliano in questo tanto piu la cosa se ritardera et dimiande se innouara niente mancho se a luy per lo meglio pare sia et faça come gli piace. Ma voi ser Benedicto non vi lal damo che da voi nominassino lo dispoth ben che mostrasse ultimatamente contetarsi. Et pero vi dicemo dobiate segnir quello vien detto et acommesso e non intrare ne persumere cusi" (23. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 169v.

[355] "Dal signor Zorzio despoth abiamo ricepute lettere per le qual doliandosi di quello ne a fatto et fa Radossauo ne auisa come per commandamento [170v] del signor nostro Re de Ongaria e per lo buon amore chel porta alla signoria nostra a mandato Radossauo molto grauandosi della intermessa a fatto contra noi. Et per lo simile a mandato ad Ysach neanche restara di mandar al Turcho afare et operare ogni cosa sapra et potra per ben et honor della signoria nostra della qualcosa fatine noticia a voiuoda … siamo auisati come adi XV del presente lo ambassador del nostro signor Re de Hongaria ad Turcho si retrouo in corte del singor Zorzi dispoth il qual con presteza segue il suo viagio al Turcho" (26. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 170v-171.

[356] "Da nouelle abiamo che Ysach col fiol del signor dispoth son venuti in Zenta et anno arobado et predado la contrada de Goizin et dela signoria de Venexia fin Sotto Scutari et dila al presente sono et stano" (30. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 173v.

correspondence with the Ragusan authorities.[357] At the same time, the Ragusan council discussed how to respond to the despot's letter, but this discussion concerned the problems of merchants in the Despotate.[358]

The Ragusans could not afford the luxury of distancing themselves from the nobles of Bosnia and the Despotate. In early August 1430, they made a decision to send letters to the Bosnian king, the despot, and Sandalj.[359] From the Ragusan deliberations, it can be inferred that, in addition to Tvrtko and Sandalj, Đurađ also had a permanent Ragusan envoy at his court.[360] The Zlatonosović family had a stable stronghold in Duke Sandalj. The Ragusan authorities informed Sandalj of the Hungarian envoy's movement through the Despotate towards the Ottoman sultan, as well as Vukašin Zlatonosović's offer.[361] They also informed Palatine Nicola Grizo that Radoslav had sent his envoy Ivaniš Vukojević to the despot with the task of proposing mediation in his reconciliation with the Republic. It appears that the despot was willing to contribute to the resolution of the conflict. He sent Dragić Ruparić to travel to Pavlović's court and then to Ragusa.[362] At the

[357] (17. 7. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 195v. (18. 7. 1430) Cons. Minus IV, 94v.

[358] (17. 7. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 196.

[359] (5. 8. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 210. "literas scribendas ambasiatoribus nostris ad regem Bosne, ad Sandagl, et etiam domino despoti Sclavonie et ser Johani de Gondola" (5. 8. 1430) Cons. Minus V, 52.

[360] (25. 8. 1430) (7. 9. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 225v, 230v.

[361] "Del dir et auisar il qual fa voiuoda di Vocassin chel sel si olsara in logo de ambassada aueremo una bella brigada il che non altramente com el dire crediamo per la bona amicicia e cordial amore, di quali esso Vocassin et lo suoi son sempre stati conzonti con Ragusa et dil confortar che lo detto Vocassin seci in presentia de Pribissau Poqualiza lo dispoto siando insieme con lui alla vendeta contra lo inimico nostro bellamente vogliamo debiate pro parte nostra regratiar al dicto voiuoda Sandagl digandoli che della bona volunta desso Vocassin et animo d'esso la qual di nouo non e ... come acordial amico ... [188] ... Scritta questa reciuessimo lettere dal nostro ambassador il qual era al nostro signor Re de Hongaria per la qual ne auisa come e armando in Biograd di Sclauonia e che de Biograd adi XVIIII^{0} luglio se parti lo magnifico Stefano Bicheli ambaxador del nostro signor al Turcho segnando con presteza suo viagio con cauali 50 bene in ponto et ordine e com belli doni il qual gia piu di die essere armado al Turcho di la qualcosa fate noticia a voiuoda" (1. 8. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 187, 188.

[362] "Dite al Re come lo signor dispoth ne a scritto che Iuanis Ducoeuich per parte de Radossau e stato de esso pregandolo che si voglia interponere a fare paxe tra lo detto Paulouich e noi al qual Radossau a mandato lo suo messo Dragich Ruparich, il qual Radossau se atendere vora a quelle parole chelia mandate a dire per lo detto Dragich le qual a noi nona deschiarite dixe che esso Dragich

same time, the Ragusans wrote to Duke Sandalj informing him of the despot's intention to send an envoy to Radoslav.[363] It is evident that Ragusans' interest in the relationship between the despot and Radoslav was not satisfied. The Senate approved the sending of a letter to Despot Đurađ in early August.[364] However, the despot's and the Bosnian king's proposed solution to the Konavle war, which they attempted to negotiate in July and August 1430, did not suit Ragusa, which had set a different outcome for itself.

In mid-August 1430, the Ragusans once again reported to the envoy at Duke Sandalj's court about Radoslav's request for Despot Đurađ to mediate in the reconciliation.[365] The attempt to involve Despot Đurađ in the war in Konavle was also documented through the Usora nobles, the Zlatonosovićs. The Ragusans informed Duke Sandalj at the beginning of August that in mid-July, Vukašin Zlatonosović had sent his envoy to Ragusa to propose, in utmost secrecy, that the Serbian despot joins the alliance against Radoslav.[366] Although the Ragusans also wished for Branković to join the alliance against Pavlović, Đurađ's participation would have cost the absence of the Bosnian king, who did not accept the despot's interference in Bosnian affairs. The despot's mediation in an attempt to resolve the conflict between Pavlović and the Ragusans was not successful. The Ragusans wrote to Sandalj twice during August 1430 about the despot's failure with Pavlović.[367] At the end of August,

vegnera qua da noi. Il qual vegnando tutto quello aueremo de esso alla maiesta sua daremo a saper" (August 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 191.

[363] "Dite a voiuoda che lo signor dispot per sue lettere ne a scritto come Iuanis Ducoeuich per parte de Radossau e stato da esso pregandolo che si voglia interponere a fare paxe tra lo detto Paulouich e noi, al qual Radossau a mandato esso dispot lo suo messo Dragich Ruparich" (7. 8. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 205.

[364] (5. 8. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 210.

[365] "Et in signo e verification di çio di teli venuto che suo ad esso Radossau lo messo del signor despot cerchandolo di paxe. Segondo noi abiamo etiam siamo auisati de mezo la sua corte fo deliberato per esso Radossau de non metersi ne cerchar per man d'altro che del dispoth pace com noi" (16. 8. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 195v.

[366] (1. 8. 1430) Lett. di Lev. XI, 187.

[367] "Et da una parte non vole che altro chal dispoto faza paxe et mo vole voiuoda e doamn vora uno altro" (19. 8. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 197v. "Di quo auessemo data la presente lettera al corier in viariula receuessimo vostra lettera com quella del dispoth et de ser Zohan de Gondola. E perche voiuoda

the Ragusans responded to the envoy's letter at the despot's court, which included the letter of Despot Đurađ from Srebrenica near Rudnik. The Ragusans' response revealed that the despot was angry with Radoslav Pavlović. In their letter, the Ragusans sought to redirect the resolution of the war towards the Ottoman court. They fueled their ambition, requesting the despot to do them a favor by sending a discreet envoy to the Ottoman subaşı and sending his envoy to Sultan Murad II to demand the places that Radoslav had occupied and that rightfully belonged to Ragusa.[368]

With the activities on the Ragusa - Bosnia - Despotate route, Radoslav Pavlović became increasingly isolated from potential Balkan negotiators, which inevitably led him to turn towards Sultan Murad II. In Murad's letter addressed to the Ragusan authorities in July 1430, it is apparent that Radoslav's diplomacy had been successful. The sultan ordered in the letter, which was brought to Ragusa by envoy Karaça, that they should return the lands that they had taken from Radoslav and send their envoy to the Ottoman court.[369] Historiography attributes the sultan's decision to send his envoy to Ragusa to the actions of Despot Đurađ. This interpretation is based on the instructions of the Ragusan authorities to their envoy Gondola in late August.[370] In mid-August 1430, an Ottoman envoy arrived in Ragusa and was received with high honor. Based on the documents they possessed, the

sperando ne fosse per despoto scritto di noulle di Romania vi dixe lo douessimo auisar di quello scriueua, pero lo direte che la lettera del despot fo datta adi 14 del presente. E di nouelle di Romania ne d'altromente ne scriue saluo ne auisa che come alter fiade vi scriuessimo abiando Radossau Paulouich mandato ad esso a pregarlo che se douesse interponere a far con noi paxe dandoli piena liberta et abiando esso dispoto mandato di luy suo homo per questa cason. Esso Radossau mo in tutto se e desdito digando cose da garzone il perche esso dispot del detto Radossauo molto se greua e con esso molto sie indignato et turbato offerndosi largamente a noi esser in tutto in nostra aiuto et fauore" (24. 8. 1430) Ibid., 201.

[368] (30. 8. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 203-203v. The decision to send the letter was voted by the Ragusans a few days earlier. "ad formando et formatas portando Consilii Rogatorum responsione dandam literam domini dispothi Georgii et ser Johanes de Gondola" (26. 8. 1430) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 246.

[369] (10. 7. 1430) Ćiro Truhelka, "Tursko-slovjenski spomenici dubrovačke arhive", *GZM* XXIII, Sarajevo, 1911, 4-5. The letter was also published by Lj. Stojanović with the wrong date. Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 227-228.

[370] Ćorović, "Despot Đurađ", 32-33. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 52. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 246.

Ragusan authorities were able to prove that the story of giving land as collateral, created by Radoslav's diplomacy, was inaccurate. The Ottoman envoy mediated a temporary reconciliation, suspending military operations until Christmas. The Ragusan authorities were invited to present their views and charters to the sultan by sending an envoy, with a promise that no tribute would be demanded from them.[371] Prior to Karaça's arrival in Ragusa, the Ragusan councils had already made decisions about sending an envoy to the Porte.[372]

The ideas of forming an alliance against Duke Radoslav were shaken by conflicts within the Bosnian Kingdom. In November 1430, an armed conflict broke out between King Tvrtko II and Duke Vukašin Zlatonosović.[373] The Ragusan authorities sent a letter to Sandalj at the end of November, expressing regret for the conflict that had arisen between Tvrtko and Vukašin.[374] The Ragusans viewed the conflict between the king and his vassal as something to be avoided, and advised their envoy at Tvrtko II's court not to follow the king if he went to Zlatonosović's territory, but rather to stay in Podvisoki.[375] The Ragusans had already mentioned Tvrtko's departure *nella contrada de Slatonosevich* a few months earlier.[376] Historiography presents Tvrtko's punishment of Zlatonosović as revenge for his good relationship with the Serbian despot.[377] Duke Vukašin had tried, through several documents presented in the summer of 1430, to negotiate the expansion of the alliance against Radoslav, which would include Đurađ, but the Bosnian

[371] Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 348-350. Ivić, "Radoslav Pavlović", 29. Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 174-176. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 300-301.

[372] (8. 8. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 211v-212v. Cons. Maius IV, 97-98.

[373] (16. 11. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 246.

[374] (22. 11. 1430) Lett. di Lev. XI, 10. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 41. Živković, "Zlatonosovići", 160.

[375] "de scribendo ser Nicola Mi. de Resti ambassiatori nostro ad Regem Bosine respondendo literis suis quod eunte domino Rege prout scribit contra Slatonosouich ipse propter infirmitatem suam eum expectare debeat in Soto Visochi" (16. 11. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 246.

[376] (18. 6. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 160v. At the beginning of December, the Ragusan authorities once again expressed their condolences to Sandalj on the occasion of the death of Duke Vukašin. (7. 12. 1430) Lett. di Lev. XI, 12. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 151. Živković, "Zlatonosovići", 161.

[377] Živković, "Zlatonosovići", 159-160.

king was strongly opposed to the idea. Sources, however, do not specifically indicate the reasons for Tvrtko's punishment. As the other nobles in Bosnia did not react strongly to this event, it was certainly the result of a great betrayal.

In September 1430, Ragusan envoys set off from Ragusa to Edirne, accompanied by an Ottoman envoy. The envoys were tasked with negotiating the purchase of certain territories belonging to the Pavlovićs.[378] Meanwhile, Duke Radoslav sent his envoy Ostoja Paštrović to prove that Konavle had not been sold to the Ragusans, but had been pledged to them as collateral. Paštrović had brought with him charters that were quickly discovered to be forgeries.[379] Afterwards, he asserted that the Bosnian king was on the side of the Ragusans because they had paid tribute to him, and that Tvrtko, Bosnian nobles, and Đurađ had been given houses in Ragusa.[380] Negotiations between the Ragusans and the sultan were successful, and Murad II issued a charter to the Ragusans in early December, granting them freedom to trade in his state. The significance of this charter lies in the fact that it stipulated that none of Ragusan's neighbors could attack the town or harm its citizens, which was directly related to the situation that had arisen over the Konavle conflict.[381] In late December, the Ragusan councilors voted to send new letters to Sigismund, Tvrtko II, Sandalj, and Đurađ to inform them of the current situation.[382] The Ragusans sought to reinforce the impression with Sandalj by writing to him that Radoslav, by sending forged charters to the sultan, had insulted the Bosnian king, Sandalj, the rest of the Bosnian nobility, and

[378] (12. 9. 1430) Lett. di Lev. XI, 1v. Lucari and Goze tried to find the despot's and Sigismund's envoys there when they arrived at the Porte, but they did not succeed. (29. 8. 1430) Lett. di Lev. X, 200-200v.

[379] Ćorović, "Despot Đurađ", 34. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 53. Tošić, "Ostoja Paštrović", 262.

[380] (7. 11. 1430) Lett. di Lev. XI, 40v.

[381] (6. 12. 1430) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 229–230. These privileges were presented to Ishak-bey by the Ragusan envoys upon their return. (22. 2. 1431) Lett. di Lev. XI, 18v. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 54. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 305.

[382] (27. 12. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 259. "Ser Matheus de Gradi, ser Thomas de Bona et ser Pasqualis de Resti ellecti fuerunt juxta partes hodiernas Rogatorum ad formando literas scribendas serenissimo domino nostro, regi Bosne, despoto Georgio et voiuode Sandagl et firmatas consilio rogatorum ferrendas" (27. 12. 1430) Cons. Minus V, 80.

Despot Đurađ.[383] The sultan decided to send his envoy Ali-bey to Ragusa, who, along with a Hungarian envoy, would ascertain the facts on the ground.[384]

At the end of January 1431, Ali-bey arrived in Ragusa at the invitation of the Ragusan authorities for a discussion.[385] In early February, discussions began on the issue in Konavle and it was decided that Ottoman and Hungarian envoys would be involved in the discussion before the rector and the Minor Council.[386] In his order, the sultan stipulated that Radoslav must also send his envoy to Ragusa, and this time Ostoja Paštrović and Budislav Bogavčić represented him. In the presence of the Ottoman, Hungarian, and Sandalj's envoys, the two had to admit that the documents presented to the sultan were forged and that their ruler had indeed sold Konavle to the Ragusans.[387] On this occasion, the Ragusans also demanded high compensation, to which Radoslav's envoys pointed out that their ruler could not pay the requested amount. In response, the Ragusans requested that a portion of the duke's possessions be assigned to them. As Radoslav's envoys were not authorized to negotiate the surrender of land, they returned to Trebinje.[388] Although the facts have come to light that Konavle indeed belongs to the territory under the jurisdiction of the Republic, Ali-bey, despite the great flattery and promises of the Ragusans, did not have the necessary authorization to decide in anyone's favor and went to inform the sultan about the new information.[389]

Ragusan citizens were not satisfied with the efforts of the Ottoman and Hungarian envoys. Through the intervention of the Porte and Hungary,

[383] "Et anche per assai non laso la falsita della poueglia mostrada che pur ancora volse palisamente et disconzamente sparlare in famando e detrahendo del honore d'esso voiuoda e dello Re di Bosna e de Bosignani e del dispoto digando che lo imperador Omorato essi viseri non volessino credere ne dare sed alguna allo Re di Bosna ne a voiuoda Sandagl ne al dispot ne ad altri Bosignani" (28. 12. 1430) Lett. di Lev. XI, 13v.

[384] (28. 12. 1430) Lett. di Lev. XI, 13v.

[385] (31. 1. 1431) Cons. Rog. IV, 268.

[386] (8. 2. 1431) Cons. Rog. IV, 270.

[387] Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 188. Ivić, "Radoslav Pavlović", 31. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 54

[388] (17. 2. 1431) Cons. Rog. IV, 271v.

[389] Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 189.

they did not achieve much, but at the same time definitively lost the support of Bosnian King Tvrtko II, leading to the withdrawal of the envoys from the king's court in March 1431.[390] In the second half of February 1431, the Ragusan envoy at the Porte wrote to their ruler, urging them to obtain permission from the sultan in order to appropriate the territory previously requested from Radoslav Pavlović.[391] They also wrote to Sigismund, requesting that he send an envoy of his own to the Porte to assist them.[392] The Bosnian king was experiencing a difficult time during this period. Ragusans learned in March 1431 that an alliance was being formed against King Tvrtko II,[393] but even this alliance failed. In the same month, they asked the envoy at Sandalj's court to clarify the circumstances surrounding the arrival of the despot's envoy, of which it was unclear whether he had arrived or was still on his way.[394] The Ragusan requests to the Serbian despot for the sending of an envoy to the sultan yielded results. In early May 1431, the Ragusans informed their envoys at the Porte that they had still not received a letter from the despot's envoy, Bezubica, from the Ottoman court, but they were expecting it.[395] The Ragusan envoys had done a good job at the Porte by the middle of 1431. The result of their lobbying was the sultan's charter of mid-June 1431, which granted the Ragusans a part of Radoslav Pavlović's possessions, including the town of Klobuk with the Vrm county

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390 Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 154.

391 (22. 2. 1431) Lett. di Lev. XI, 18v.

392 (24. 2. 1431) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 352-353.

393 Dinić, *Državni sabor*, 69. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 163.

394 "E que si sente et se a dala porta del Turcho dele qualcose et nouelle vegnando voi ne dobiate piena informacion dare perche sentiamo che ambassada del dispot zoe lo fradelo de Radof venne o fin mo e venuta a Sandagl pero datine a saper quanto potreti a que sera venuta essa ambassada e tutto quello praticarano et farano finche dila secreti et vegnando di tutto ne auisarete" (10. 3. 1431) Lett. di Lev. XI, 21.

395 "Questi di passadi riceuessimo duo vostre lettere per le qual fossimo auisati di quanto aueti sequito e della bona sperazna aueti ariuando lo subassa lo qual speremo in quelli de douesse ariuar di la e del recreuer delle nostre per lo simile fossimo auisati. Ma la terza vostra lettere li qual dette auer data a Besubiça ambassador del dispote de esserne inuiata non abiamo receputo" (7. 5. 1431) Lett. di Lev. XI, 27.

and Trebinje with Lug. Additionally, the charter stipulated that the sultan would send Ali-bey to bring the Ragusans to the possession.[396]

When he learned that the Ottoman envoy was coming to Ragusa, Duke Radoslav sent a letter to him, which the Ragusan authorities immediately forwarded to the Porte.[397] As the Ragusan delegation arrived in the town with Ali-bey, the authorities decided that Petar Lucari, who had still not arrived in the town, should immediately return to the sultan's court, carrying the letter that the Ottoman envoy had sealed, and to request that Ishak-bey militarily intervene against Radoslav, and that the Porte inform the Bosnian king and Sandalj to help Ragusa in this situation.[398] However, Lucari did not return from this mission. He arrived at the Ottoman authorities, but died there. It seems that this letter changed the course of the entire war. There was no response from the Porte concerning military action, and Ali-bey was unable to fulfill his task of introducing the Ragusans to the promised counties due to the absence of an army, so he decided to return home at the end of July 1431.[399] From this moment on, relations between the Republic and the Ottoman Empire would cool down.

King Tvrtko II and Duke Radoslav reconciled in the autumn of 1431. Their reconciliation in Ragusa was definitively confirmed by the envoy of King Tvrtko who was there in September. On that occasion, Tvrtko's envoy emphasized that the king was angry because they had sent a delegation to the Porte without his permission. Through his envoy, Tvrtko conveyed that he would not allow the seizure of Bosnian territory. As a response to these allegations, the Ragusans stated that they had to turn to the sultan, since Tvrtko had told them he could not attack Radoslav because he was afraid of the sultan.[400] We learn about their reconciliation from a letter sent to the Hungarian king in early September, in which it is emphasized that Radoslav reconciled

[396] (9. 6. 1431) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 231.

[397] (22. 7. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 25.

[398] (9. 10. 1431) Lett. di Lev. XI, 279-279v.

[399] Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 194.

[400] (19. 9. 1431) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 358-362. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 249.

with the Bosnian king and is encouraging him to attack Ragusa. Through this letter, they asked Sigismund to request that Tvrtko refrain from attacking them since they were under his jurisdiction.[401]

Towards the end of 1431, rumors began to circulate in Ragusa that Tvrtko II was staying at Sandalj's court on behalf of Radoslav. Ragusans were concerned that an alliance they initiated a year earlier might now be formed, but it would be directed against them. For that purpose, they sent an envoy under the pretense of bringing Sandalj payment for the lease of customs.[402] The envoys informed Sandalj of the potential harm Ishak-bey could cause to the Bosnian nobility and the king. Additionally, Ragusans sent envoys to the royal court.[403] However, as soon as Radoslav learned of this envoy, he sent his own envoys to speak against the Ragusans at the royal court.[404] Ragusans prepared to send a new delegation to Sultan Murad in November 1431 made up of their citizens living in the Despotate as a result of the changed constellation of relations in Bosnia.[405] Matheo Crosis and Marin Georgio were chosen for this mission and, upon their arrival in December, they were coldly received by the sultan and the vizier and failed to negotiate any significant involvement of the Ottomans.[406] At the same time, Ottoman-Hungarian relations were disrupted, and the sultan was unwilling to assist the Republic from that side as well. By the end of the year, Radoslav's efforts had paid off and he managed to obtain a revocation of the concession of his territories to the Ragusan authorities from Murad II.[407] The facts pointed to the need for the Ragusan authorities to reorient their policy towards the Bosnian king, who had established himself as an arbiter with his firm stance.

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401 (6. 9. 1431) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 356-357. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 155. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 307.

402 Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 196.

403 Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 156.

404 (19. 1. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 68.

405 (3. 11. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 44-44v.

406 Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 56.

407 Perojević, "Stjepan Tvrtko II. Tvrtković (opet)", 483. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 250

In February 1432, Ragusans initiated reconciliation when Tvrtko instructed both sides to send envoys to his court.[408] A series of negotiations took place over the following months, culminating in activities related to the drafting of charters and reconciliation at the end of 1432. The text of the agreement was preserved in a charter issued by Radoslav Pavlović to the Ragusans at the end of October 1432. Radoslav recognized all the old charters and agreements between himself and Ragusa, renounced all revenues and tributes during the war, and he would be able to manage his wealth in Ragusa two years after the end of the war. Additionally, he would seek to influence the Bosnian king and the sultan to ratify this agreement.[409] As can be seen, the Ragusans did not achieve any of their ultimate goals with this peace treaty. In the presence of the Ragusans' and Radoslav's envoys, Tvrtko II issued a charter to the Ragusans in Sutjeska, confirming this reconciliation.[410] At the end of March, Radoslav Pavlović issued his own charter, confirming the previously concluded ceasefire.[411] As a result, the Konavle War definitively ended, leaving behind a long-lasting effect both on Bosnia's domestic and foreign policies. The role of Despot Đurađ in the Konavle War remained tied to Ragusans' ideas of buying out Pavlović's territories, where the despot's position with the Porte was supposed to facilitate the deal. With the weakening of the Ragusans' influence with the sultan and the assumption of arbitration by Tvrtko II from the middle of 1431, Đurađ's role in the Konavle issue was completely suppressed.

[408] (24. 2. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 20.

[409] (25. 10. 1432) Cons. Rog. V, 113v. (25. 10. 1432) Miklosich, *Monumenta*, 366-371.

[410] (2. 3. 1433) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 512-513. Miklosich, *Monumenta*, 375.

[411] (25. 3. 1433) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 631-632.

"Scandalo del signor despothi Zorzi verso la sua corona": The War between King Tvrtko II and Despot Đurađ (1432–1433)

Parallel to the efforts to suppress Ragusan ambitions to purchase territory under the authority of the Bosnian Crown in 1431, Tvrtko II became involved in conflict with Despot Đurađ.[412] The antagonism of the Bosnian king toward foreign involvement in the issue of Konavle, in addition to Ragusa and the Ottomans, extended also to the influence of Despot Đurađ. Although the Ragusans tried to engage the despot during the first months of diplomatic correspondence on the issue of Konavle, these efforts did not result in open hostility between Bosnia and the Despotate. Despot Đurađ's increasingly active involvement on the side of Ragusa, i.e., his role as a mediator between the Ottoman and the Ragusan authorities that he assumed in late 1430 and throughout 1431, led to the exacerbation of Bosnia's relations with its eastern neighbors. The Bosnian king expressed his political disagreements with Ragusa and the Despotate no later than September 1431, when the Ragusans sought alternative routes to the Despotate. In September and October 1431, caravans headed toward the Despotate passed through Sandalj's territory, with whom the Ragusans maintained a good relationship.[413]

[412] In earlier publications, this conflict was characterized as a natural continuation of the conflict between King Tvrtko II and the Zlatonosović family, with an emphasis on the Zlatonosovićs being vassals of Despot Đurađ, who had engaged against the Bosnian king precisely because of this fact. Jelena Mrgić, "Pismo kneza Dragiše Dinjičića knezu Vukašinu i vojvodi Vukmiru Zlatonosoviću", *SSA* 6, Beograd 2007, 206-207. In no case do the sources indicate such relations between the Bosnian noble family Zlatonosović and Despot Đurađ.

[413] "de dimittendo salmas LXXXV mercatorum nostrorum prout requirunt ire viam voivode Sandagl" The second proposal was adopted: "de dimittendo pro nunc ire salmas solumno L" (26. 9. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 37. On the side: "Pro mercatorum Sclauonie ituris"; "quia in caravana itura per viam voivode Sandagl in Sclavoniam ire possint usque ad salmas LXV pannorum et merçarias de pluri ex salmis et merçariis mercatorum qui vadunt in Sclavoniam, exceptando tamen ab hoc illos de Srebrnica et Svonich" (1. 10. 1431) Ibid.

The causes behind the redirection of Ragusan caravans through Sandalj's territory became apparent in early October when the Ragusan authorities requested permission from the Bosnian king for their merchants to cross into Srebrenica.[414] Nevertheless, Tvrtko remained uncompromising in his economic blockade of the despot's territory. In mid-October, the Ragusans discussed the problems faced by their merchants on the way to the Despotate.[415] Ragusans apparently did not have high hopes that the Bosnian ruler would change his mind. On the same day, a decision was made to allow trade with the Despotate via the Zeta route.[416] Roads through Bosnia were Ragusa's main route to the Despotate, and the difficulty of trading with the Republic caused significant financial losses. In mid-October, the Ragusans voted to send gifts to the Bosnian king in an attempt to win his favor for their merchants.[417] However, Ragusa's losses did not evoke sympathy from Tvrtko II due to their ambitions for Bosnian territory. In addition to his anger towards the despot's interference in the Konavle war, King Tvrtko II had reasons to be upset with the Ragusans. Although they had requested the Bosnian king to free up the routes, the Ragusans established correspondence with the anti-king Radivoj Ostojić, who was supported by the Ottomans, in late October 1431.[418] By the end of November 1431, the Ragusans had prepared instructions for two envoys sent to the Bosnian king. Their primary complaints involved the arrest of merchants, the confiscation of silver, and the closing of passages to the Despotate and Hungary. It was stressed that the agreement they reached with the sultan did not affect the fact that they would continue to pay tribute to the Bosnian crown. The Ragusans also tried to justify their attempt to purchase

[414] "scribendi domino regi Bosne recommittendo sibi mercatores nostros et quod promittere velit eos transire et ire cum suis mercantiis in Srebrenizam" (1. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 37.

[415] "de induciando ad consulendum super literis regis Bosne lectis in presenti consilio super facto franchi et mercanciarum non mittendarum in Sclavoniam quibus non dabit transitum" (12. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 39v.

[416] Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi", 32.

[417] (20. 10. 1431) Cons. Maius IV, 156v.

[418] (26. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 42v. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 163. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 309.

certain Bosnian territories.[419] Due to the scarcity of information, it is difficult to determine how much the Ragusan authorities' decision in November 1431 to send a letter to Tvrtko II from Buda was related to transit problems to the Despotate.[420] The Ragusan chronicler Resti also wrote about the difficulties of Ragusans' trade through Bosnia to the Despotate and Hungary.[421] In another part of Europe, at the end of 1431, a document vividly describes the situation in which Bosnia and the Despotate found themselves in relation to the Ottomans. Pope Eugenius IV (1431-1447) issued a bull in mid-December in which he expressed his concern for the Christian people who by fighting each other were helping the Ottomans and were being increasingly pushed back by them.[422]

At the beginning of 1432, the economic blockade of the Despotate, which involved cutting off economic routes, was still in effect. Due to customs problems, trade through Shkodra was difficult.[423] The Ragusans sent an envoy to the Bosnian king which vaguely highlighted the cause of the problem between Bosnia and the Despotate. The Ragusan envoy mentioned that Tvrtko II had introduced transit bans *per certo scandalo del signor despothi Zorzi verso la sua corona*.[424] In light of the sources available, it is not possible to reconstruct the scandal that took place. The Ragusan expression does not suggest any kind of attack by Despot Đurađ. There is a possibility that Despot Đurađ's involvement in the resolution of the Konavle War through the intervention of the Ottomans, with whom he had good relations, and from whom the Bosnian king was wary during this period, was a significant contributing factor. Despot Đurađ had his own interests in mind in these combinations as well.

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419 (25. 11. 1431) Lett. di Lev. XI, 64-65.

420 (11. 11. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 47.

421 "Aveva intanto, a suggestione d'alcuni poco amorevoli, il re di Bosna mosso avanie alli mercanti Ragusei, abitanti in Bosna, e fatili arrestar con prender'i le mercanzie e serrar tutti li passi, accio non potessero liberamente, secondol'usato, passar oltre li monti per andar in Slavonia o in Ungaria." Restius, *Chronica*, 251.

422 Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 60.

423 (18. 1. 1432) Cons. Rog. V, 59v.

424 (19. 1. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 68.

Alongside the resolution of the Konavle issue, there was an improvement in the relationship between Ragusa and Duke Radoslav in February 1432, who finally opened his territory to their merchants for trade and transit.[425] Early in March, the Ragusan authorities received information about Tvrtko's potential departure to Usora and ordered their envoy to follow him. Tvrtko again implemented his policy of blocking the Despotate in mid-March. The Ragusans complained about the attack on the caravan that was heading from Ragusa towards Srebrenica.[426] At this time, a large Ottoman force invaded and moved towards Zadar.[427] At that time, the Bosnian king did not pay much attention to the Ottoman army and seemed to be planning an attack against the Serbian despot. In early March 1432, the Ragusans instructed their envoys that if the king went to Usora, they should follow him only to the borders of the territories under the king's direct authority.[428]

In mid-March, Tvrtko was still staying in Sutjeska, from where the Ragusan envoy was reporting to the authorities.[429] From there, Tvrtko traveled to Usora. The reason for Tvrtko's stay in Glavičica near Zvonik in early April 1432 is unknown. From a letter he sent to the Ragusan authorities at that time, it was clear that he would not permit any territorial separation under the Bosnian crown, regardless of whether the territory was under his direct control or owned by the crown and managed by Bosnian nobles in accordance with feudal principles.[430] When considering the context of the time

[425] (23. 2. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 73v-74.

[426] "Eo quia dum haberent plures pannos in carauano quod iuit in Srebreniza ad Buna furtiuo ino sibi subtracti et ablati quatuor panni fini de LXXV in una balla de ipso carauano et certe merce quarum quantitatem ad presens nesciunt" (17. 3. 1432) Lam. de for. IX, 19v.

[427] "Isach autem, voivoda Teucrorum, per viam Bosne cum circa 3.m. Teucris trasivit in Croaciam, in Luca et tenutis Iadre." (22. 3. 1432) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 367.

[428] (1. 3. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 78.

[429] (17. 4. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 86v.

[430] "La segonda la resposta la qual in presentia sua et de li suoi zentilomeni lo Re vi feci dar per bocha de Dragissa Digniçich per sua parte et di tutta Bosna digando se Radossauo vi a fatto algun mal ouer non douer vegasi. Et se auera fatto quello non se die pagi quello conuegneuelo sera. Ma lo terreno e contrada della corona de Bosna non volemo dar ne consentir che se dia sotto altra signoria ne sotto altra corona ne anche volemo cazar ouer rimouere li nobili e antichi homeni per nullo

and later events, it is difficult to avoid the impression that Tvrtko's visit to Usora in April 1432 was intended to demonstrate his power to the Serbian despot whom the Bosnian king had kept in economic isolation for months. Tvrtko's policy continued in this direction. In any case, the Bosnian king returned to his court in Sutjeska by early May at the latest. In early May, the Ragusan authorities once again urged the Bosnian king to lift the bans, pointing out that this type of economic policy was more harmful to the Republic than to Despot Đurađ.[431] Tvrtko II did not respond to the Ragusans' requests this time either. As a result, the Ragusan authorities were forced to cease all trade with the Despotate before the end of June until they received further information.[432] A few days later, the Ragusan authorities confirmed this decision.[433] It is evident that the subjects of the Bosnian king, such as those who participated in the caravan raids of March 1432, prevented goods from reaching the Despotate, resulting in a significant loss for the Ragusans. Additional problems for Ragusa at this time were caused by Sandalj's vassals Marko Grgurević, and Vukosav and Vukašin Milatović, whose people were raiding caravans on their territory.[434]

In the summer of 1432, the Ottoman army once again appeared on the territory of Bosnia and the Despotate, moving through these states towards

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modo da loro patrimonio confirmando questa tal risposta tutti li altri zentilomeni et esso in stesso Re excogitandoue in tutto de non volermi dare de li terreni neanche menar di loro patrimonio li zentilomeni" (17. 4. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 86v.

[431] "Quando vi abia detto lo Re del serar a fatto ali mercadanti della via de Sclauonia abiamo ben inteso pero vogliamo che eom bella manera e con ogni humanita e dolceza a voi possibile dobiate pregare la maiesta del Re come ben factore nostro sinulare et considerando che li mercadanti nostri non son rason de alguno rancore tra la maiesta sua et lo signor dispot" (14. 5. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 94.

[432] (30. 6. 1432) Cons. Rog. V, 92. Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi", 32.

[433] (3. 7. 1432) Cons. Rog. V, 92.

[434] In a letter to Duke Sandalj Hranić: "Et dandoli la littera de credenza a luy se driza la qual vi abiamo data quando aldientia vi vora dare con bon modo et bella manera li exponereti per ordine segendo da li mercadanti sereti informado lo caso della arobalia seguito alla carauana de li nostri mercadanti de Andrea Muruich et Ziucho Braicouich et altri la qual andaua in Bosna. Et siando a Chotaoze suo asalita da certi homeni arobatori de li quali forno cognoscuti esserli homeni de la sua magnificencia e homeni de Marcho Gergorouich e homeni de [122] Vocossau et Vocassin Milatouichi [122v]" (18. 11. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 122-122v.

Belgrade.[435] At that time, the Burgundian envoy Bertrandon de la Broquière was staying at the Ottoman court, where he recorded the Ottoman system of borders with Bosnia and the Despotate. According to his account, an Ottoman commander was responsible for the borders from Wallachia to the Black Sea, while Sinan-bey commanded the border from there to Bosnia, and Ishak-bey was in charge of the border from Bosnia to the Despotate.[436]

In the coming months, the Bosnian king expanded his activities directed against Despot Đurađ. Tvrtko's plans to visit Usora, a region bordering the territory of the Despotate, were known in Ragusa at the beginning of August. The Ragusan envoys, as had been done a few months earlier, were given precautionary measures which involved escorting the king only to Mount Kladanj and asking the king to wait for him in Visoko or some place in the vicinity.[437] These were activities in which they did not wish to participate. In a similar manner, the Ragusans had observed Tvrtko's attack on the Zlatonosovićs two years earlier. Experienced Ragusan envoys sought to avoid potential disagreements caused by the presence of their envoys. Sources do not provide any information regarding the Bosnian king's journey this time around as well. The sources from winter 1432 cover significant activities related to the conflict between the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot. The Ragusan authorities pointed out in their regular report to King Sigismund in mid-November that the Bosnian king and Serbian despot continued to cause damage and threaten each other on the borders of their territories.[438] The key point in the Ragusan report relates to the claim that this

[435] (31. 7. 1432) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 374.

[436] Bertrandon de la Brokijer, *Putovanje preko mora*, Izdavačko preduzeće Narodne Republike Srbije, Beograd 1950, 129.

[437] On the side: "Pro ambaxiatores nostris ad regem Bosne qui prestolari debeant in Visochi"; "quia domino rege Bosne eunte in Usoram ambassiatores nostri qui sunt penes eum illum associare debeat usque ad montem Cladagn et ibi ab eo licenciam cum bono modo accipare et venire ad standum et ipsum expectandum in Visochi vel id circa in alio loco de quo sibi melius videbitur" (4. 8. 1432) Cons. Rog. V, 99v.

[438] "Lis orta est inter dominum regem Bosne et dominum dispot Sclavonie, qui ad continia territorium suorum se damnis afficiunt ac turbant et molestant." (11. 11. 1432) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 378.

was a continuation of the war. Apparently, an earlier report had been sent to the Buda court indicating the beginning of military conflicts between the king and the despot. A scant Ragusan reference to exceptionally significant events also supports this conclusion. From their perspective at the time, it was important to point out only the fact that the conflict had continued. The only indicator that could be viewed in symbiosis with the November events is Tvrtko's departure towards Usora in early August. There is no doubt that armed attacks began between these two chronological determinants. The Ragusans were increasingly reluctant to get involved in Bosnian affairs. Disagreements also broke out in Bosnia between the Pavlović and Kosača families. By early December, the Ragusan authorities no longer had fresh information from the battlefield, so they instructed their envoys at the Bosnian king's court to send them information regarding Voivode Barak, King Tvrtko II, and Despot Đurađ.[439]

After several years of stable relations with the Ottomans, the expiration of the three-year peace treaty between the Ottomans and the Hungarians led to new Ottoman raids and movements of akinji in Bosnian and neighboring territories. In the report addressed to Sigismund in November 1432, when the conflicts between the Bosnian king and the despot were mentioned, the Ragusans also mentioned the Ottoman forces, which numbered around three thousand soldiers, moving through Croatian territory.[440]

In the winter period, between the end of 1432 and the beginning of 1433, fewer sources have been preserved. There appears to have been a cessation of military conflicts between Tvrtko II and Despot Đurađ at that time. At the beginning of 1433, the Bosnian king frequently changed his places of residence. In February and March, the Ragusans sent him envoys to Prozor

[439] "Del significar de nouelle vi lal demo vogliando che de puo quello aueti sentito et e seguito et sentireti et seguira, tanto de Barach e deli ussi e dela oste de Vugari quanto del Re de Bosna et del despoto" (3. 12. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 123v-124v.

[440] "Nova autem emergencia hec sunt: Tunc ad numerum 3000 equorum vel circha in Croaciam pluribus diebus transierunt, ubi per ca, que nobis relata veniunt parum imo nullum damnum intulerunt." (11. 11. 1432) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 378.

and Sutjeska.[441] This was precisely the time when Despot Đurađ was arranging the marriages of his daughters to eastern and western dignitaries. Ragusans had information regarding the engagement in June 1433.[442] At the time when Broquière was traveling through the Despotate, plans were known for the marriage of the despot's daughter Mara to Sultan Murad II.[443] The despot's rapprochement with the sultan occurred due to Đurađ's fear of the Ottomans after the expiration of the Ottoman-Hungarian peace treaty in 1432. Despot Đurađ sought to secure himself with his Hungarian allies. By March 1433 at the latest, a marriage contract was made for the marriage of Kantakuzina, the despot's second daughter, to Ulrich II of Cili, the son of Frederick II and grandson of Hermann II of Cili.[444]

The engagement agreements of his daughters provided him with a better strategy for foreign policy, thus enabling him to address the unresolved issues with Bosnian King in spring 1433. On the other hand, Tvrtko II's positions within Bosnia were not encouraging. Already during the exhausting negotiations over the Konavle War, Tvrtko II and Sandalj grew apart. Duke Radoslav was nominally on Tvrtko's side, but it is unclear what his potential role might have been at that time. The Ragusan authorities wrote to their envoy at Pavlović's court in early April about Sandalj and Radoslav's friendship.[445] Although the two Bosnian dukes were not particularly on good terms even then, there was no conflict between them. Hindered by Đurađ's relationship with the sultan, to diplomatically link the Ottoman court to his side, Tvrtko was left with only one ally, Hungarian King Sigismund. The Bosnian king could not rely on the Ottoman court, as it was precisely the Ottomans who

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[441] Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 166.

[442] (15. 6. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 150.

[443] Brokijer, *Putovanje preko mora*, 131. Details about the marriage of Mara Branković in: Mihailo St. Popović, *Mara Branković: žena između hrišćanskog i islamskog kulturnog kruga u 15. veku*, Akademska knjiga, Novi Sad 2014, 52-92.

[444] Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, *I*, 359. Spremić, *Despot*, 205. The Ragusan chronicler Resti also discusses the marriage of the daughters of Despot Đurađ to the courts of Sultan Murad II and the Cili family. Restius, *Chronica*, 262.

[445] (2. 4. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 138v.

supported the pretender Radivoj for the Bosnian throne at that time. Alongside the war against the despot, the Bosnian king faced serious difficulties due to the appearance of Radivoj, the son of King Ostoja. In February and March 1433, Broquière was at the Ottoman court in Edirne, where a person from Bosnia presented a plan to the sultan for overthrowing the legitimate king, which is deemed to be the act of Radivoj Ostojić.[446]

In late April 1433, Tvrtko contacted the Ragusans from Podzvonik with a request that their envoy accompany his envoys to the court of King Sigismund in Buda. At the beginning of May, the Ragusan council passed a proposal to send a nobleman to Hungary along with the Bosnian envoys.[447] In reply to their envoy in Podzvonik that day, the Ragusan authorities agreed to Tvrtko's request and advised him to bring gifts in the form of ducats to the Hungarian court, but provided no further information regarding the purpose of sending envoys to Sigismund. The dispatch of these envoys was intended to remain a secret between Tvrtko II and the Ragusan authorities.[448] There is no information as to when the joint Bosnian and Ragusan delegation traveled to the court of King Sigismund. A month later, the Ragusan council passed a decision to send Pasqual Resti to Buda. At the same time, a decision was made to respond to a letter from the Bosnian king, but this letter has not been preserved.[449]

In the spring of 1433, conflicts between Tvrtko and Đurađ continued. At the beginning of April, the Bosnian king was in Usora,[450] while at the same time, Duke Radoslav was moving towards the eastern borders of his territory and was located in Medviđa near Višegrad at the end of March.[451] Tvrtko II's activities in Usora during April and May 1433 regarding the potential border

[446] Brokijer, *Putovanje preko mora*, 117. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 313.

[447] (5. 5. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 138v.

[448] (5. 5. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 144v-145.

[449] (10. 6. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 149.

[450] (1. 4. 1433) Eusebius Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae potissimum ecclesiastica cum insertis editorum documentarum regestis ab anno 925 usque ad annum 1752*, Academia scientarium et artium Slavorum meridionalium: In taberna libraria eiusdem Societatis typographicae, Zagrabiae 1892, 139.

[451] (28. 3. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 137v.

conflict are unknown. The Serbian despot was still at his court in Smederevo at that time. Even though the Ragusans frequently sent envoys to the Serbian despot and the Bosnian king, they did not provide any information regarding their conflict. It seems that the Bosnian king did not leave Zvonik since April 1433. At the beginning of May, the Ragusan envoy sent a letter to his authorities from Podzvonik, where he was located because the king was staying there.[452] Despot Đurađ came close to the Bosnian Kingdom only in the second half of June 1433. At that time, the Ragusan authorities issued a ban to their envoys from accompanying the Serbian despot due to his possible stay on Bosnian territory.[453] A few days earlier, the Ragusans were preparing instructions for their envoys at the despot Đurađ's court. Even then, the Ragusan authorities pointed out that it was possible for Đurađ to be absent from his court.[454] It appears that the conflict between the warring parties was taking place at the time, which justifies the Ragusan decision. As of the end of June, Duke Sandalj asked the Ragusans for permission to purchase weapons.[455] However, his attempt to purchase weapons may not necessarily represent his direct military participation in the conflict between the king and the despot. The potential conflict ended no later than the beginning of July 1433, as Đurađ was already back in his state at that time. At the end of July, the Ragusan authorities responded to their envoy's letter at the despot's court in Smederevo, which was sent at the beginning of the month.[456] There is no doubt that the Ragusans had information regarding the despot's quick

[452] (5. 5. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 144v.

[453] "de scribendo ser Palladino de Gondola et ser Andree de Babalio ambaxiatoribus nostris quod domino dispoto eunte uel existente in contratis regis Bosne, nullo modo cum eo ire vel se ponere debeant quosque in ipsis partibus regis Bosne fuerit vel steterit" (23. 6. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 152v. Earlier publications, due to imprecise source presentation, complicated the arrival of the despot in Bosnia. According to M. Spremić's interpretation, Despot Đurađ was preparing to depart for Bosnia at the end of April 1433, while P. Živković dated the decision mentioning the despot's departure to Bosnia to May 1433 and published an inaccurate excerpt. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 166. Spremić, *Despot*, 182-183.

[454] (15. 6. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 148v.

[455] (25. 6. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 153.

[456] (31. 7. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 156v.

return to Smederevo. In July, decisions were made by the Senate regarding letters to Ragusan envoys at the despot's court, and they concerned usual business.[457]

Potential conflicts between the armies of Tvrtko II and Đurađ in 1433 can only be inferred from the overlap in the chronology of their presence in Usora. There are no detailed accounts of their conflicts in sources from this period. According to sources, Tvrtko II was in Usora from April 1433. This indicates that the Bosnian king anticipated the continuation of the conflict documented in this region a year earlier. Even the despot's stay near the Bosnian border in June 1433 did not motivate Ragusan's envoys to engage more actively with this issue. Ragusans' correspondence with Tvrtko and Đurađ during this period typically focused on trade issues.

Mavro Orbini writes that Despot Đurađ devastated the town of Zvonik in Usora with his army during the war with the Bosnian king. According to the Ragusan chronicler, this event occurred in 1436.[458] Based on the information presented, the despot's attack on Zvonik may have occurred at the end of June or the beginning of July 1433, while Đurađ was in close proximity to the Bosnian Kingdom. Almost two decades later, the Ragusans reflected on the despot's possession of Zvonik. In a letter from 1451, they mentioned that Despot Đurađ and Duke Sandalj had previously bought lands from King Tvrtko, and that as a result, the despot had the authority over Zvonik and Usora.[459] The Ragusan document regarding the purchase of part of Usora by Đurađ and Sandalj most likely refers to the period of 1432 and 1433, when conflicts were taking place in this part of Bosnia, especially considering that Sandalj died two years later. The sources do not indicate

[457] (1. 7. 1433) (27. 7. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 153, 156.

[458] Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 163.

[459] In a letter to the despot, comparing it to the current plans in the war with Herzog Stjepan Vukčić: "E cossi fexe altre volte esso signor despot a vaivoda Sandagl, quando comprono el paese del re Tuertcho e per dicta cason el signor despot se fexe signor de Svonich e de Ussora" (1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 92. Restius, *Chronica*, 320. On the political status of Usora and the administrative role of Zvonik, see: Pavao Anđelić, "O usorskim vojvodama i političkom statusu Usore u srednjem vijeku", *Prilozi* XIII/13, Sarajevo 1977, 17-48.

from whom the aforementioned duo purchased Zvonik, nor what Sandalj's role was in these events. During the Konavle War, which was fought almost parallel to these events, the Ragusans sought to purchase certain territories of Duke Radoslav from Sultan Murad II. Due to problems associated with the export of silver, the Ragusans encouraged the despot in a letter to their envoys in July 1433, saying that he could achieve a lot at the sultan's court.[460] Based on all indications, the despot likely acquired his territory within the kingdom through his future son-in-law, Sultan Murad II. The possibility of a potential purchase from Sigismund seemed unlikely, especially in light of the events of 1434, when the Bosnian king was in Hungary. The despot's ownership of this territory only became evident in the 1450s. In a letter from 1453, the despot referred to himself as the sovereign of *totius Uxore*, despite holding only one part of this region.[461] The attitude of the Hungarians towards the events between Đurađ and Tvrtko II is particularly interesting. Despite the fact that the Bosnian king addressed the Buda court at the beginning of May 1433, Sigismund did not react. In any case, the Hungarian king had more significant matters to attend to outside Hungary at that time, namely, he was crowned Holy Roman Emperor at the end of May.[462]

During the autumn of 1433, the Bosnian king encountered major problems within the state, which were further exacerbated by a new Ottoman invasion. In April 1433, during the conclusion of a contract for the transport of goods to Višegrad, it was emphasized that the Vlachs would not take the risk if the Ottomans attacked.[463] The conflict between Tvrtko II and Đurađ during the spring and summer of 1433 was certainly taking place parallel to the Ottoman presence in Bosnia. The Split rector reported in 1434 that

[460] "luy obtegnira dal ditto imperator Omarat non solamenta questa apresso esso imperator minima facenda ma ogni altre mazon" (31. 7. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 157.

[461] "Venit nuper ad nos magnificus Junius de Gradibus de Ragusio orator illustrissimi principis Georgii despoti regni Rascie et Albanie, Rive et totius Uxore domini" (8. 10. 1453) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 171.

[462] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 231.

[463] (20. 4. 1433) DAD, Diversa Notariae XVIII, 9v.

Ottoman units had spent the previous year on the territory of Bosnia.[464] During the conflict between Bosnia and the Despotate, preparations for the Council of Basel were underway in Europe. The synodists inquired about the situation in Bosnia and the Despotate in Ragusa and attempted to negotiate the sending of envoys from these states to the council. In early October, the Ragusan authorities responded to their envoy at the council that these states would not be able to send envoys due to the ongoing war and because Radivoj, a pretender to the throne, had appeared in the state.[465] Radivoj attempted to establish more significant relations with the Ragusans in September 1433, but his efforts were unsuccessful.[466]

Duke Radoslav distanced himself from the Bosnian king after the resolution of the conflict between Tvrtko and Đurađ. Early in September 1433, the Ragusan council decided to mediate in order to reconcile Radoslav and Sandalj.[467] It appears that the treacherous Pavlović has completely switched sides. In addition to reconciling with Sandalj, Radoslav also worked on a rapprochement with the despot. Radoslav addressed the Ragusans by the end of August 1433 with a request for mediation regarding his reconciliation with the despot.[468] Ragusan authorities expressed their gratitude to the despot in early October for fulfilling their wishes regarding the reconciliation

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464 Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 191.

465 (5. 10. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 168. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 64.

466 (17. 9. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 161. Truhelka, "Konavoski rat", 208. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 167, 169.

467 (1. 9. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 160v.

468 "Apresso perche siamo requerti da voiuoda Radossau Paulouich che nuy vogliamo pregar el signor dispothi se digna acceptarlo per suo bon amigo volemo dobiati con abel tempo dauanti el ditto signor dispoti comparer et a luy in questo modo dirli: [159v] Ilustre signor gentilomeni de Ragusa come cordialissimi amici de la magnificentia vostra i quali amano veder i signori e baroni de Bosna vostri conuici viuer con vuy in bon e fraterno amor cusi per gete de la mente a riposo de la persona de la signoria vostra e mance spexa come per lo bon e pacifico stato di li subditi vostri. Lo ben e pacifico stato de i quali desiderano et amano veder quanto el lor proprio. Siando requerti per voiuoda Radossauo vogliamo pregar la magnificentia vostra de acceptando in gratia e per suo bon amico cosi per le rason ditte et per che amano veder bon amor e paxe tra la magnificentia vostra e quello de luy voiuoda Radossau come amici comuni pregano instantemente la signoria vostra se digna aceptarlo per suo bon e fidel amico [159v]" (25. 8. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 159-159v.

with Duke Radoslav.[469] The act of reconciliation raises the question of potential wrongdoing that Pavlović may have committed towards Đurađ in the past. The Ragusan perspective indicates that Despot Đurađ was angered by the Bosnian duke during the attempted reconciliation during the Konavle War. The Ragusan chronicler Resti also writes about Ragusa's involvement in reconciling the two sides. According to his account, despite the fact that Radoslav had been an enemy of the Republic in the past, the Ragusan envoys skillfully managed to reconcile the duke and the despot.[470] Pavlović's reconciliation with Despot Đurađ, on the other hand, inevitably led to his distancing from the Bosnian king.

The situation between the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot had completely calmed down by the end of the year. The long-standing economic isolation of the Despotate also ended. The Ragusans negotiated the departure of caravans through the Bosnian route to the territory of the Despotate in October and December.[471] In the last days of 1433, the Ragusans withdrew two of their envoys from the despot's court.[472] The Ragusans' activities at the king's and despot's courts during 1433, when their conflict arose, were primarily oriented towards securing unhindered trade, which

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[469] "Allo acceptare de le pregere nostre a fatto el ditto signor de voler riceuer el hauer voiuoda Radossau Paulouich in e per suo bono amigo molto ne piaxe et a zio vogliamo a say per nostra parte dobiati regratiarlo" (1. 10. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 165.

[470] "Radoslavo Pavlovich, vedendo l'andata degli ambasciatori alla coete del despota, col qual aveva delli dissapori, prego la repubblica accommetter allli suoi ministri di veder rappacificarli e levar l'occasione delle differenze. Il senato, benche sepre avesse considerato eso Pavlovich uomo torbido e senza legge, antico suo nemico, pure, perche vedeva li principi slavi per ogni piccola differenza ricorrer all' ajuto de' Turchi, e questi abbracciar ogni occaone per avec pretesti di levare, ora ad uno, ora all'altro, i pasei, faceva conto d'esser meglio tollerate esso Pavlovich, benche diffifente, debole pero di forze, che aver un giorno i Turchi condinanti, con incertezza del sistema da tenersi da quelli barbari verso la repubblica... Giorgio despota, principe di qualche talento, il quale in alcune occasioni ha mostrato d'intender la verita dell' interesse di stato, ed in altre ha preteso d'intenderla, ma coll' ingannarsi ha visto l'ultima rovina della propria casa e la perdita delli suoi stati, in questa occasione diede orecchio agli ambasciatori di Ragusa, i quali agirono tanto bene, che con un trattato tolsero tutte le differenze tra lui e Pavlovich." Restius, *Chronica*, 262-263.

[471] Kurtović, *Konj*, 262, 264.

[472] (12. 12. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 178v.

was seriously threatened at the time. While the Ragusans felt the Ottoman pressure on their own economy, an even greater danger loomed over Bosnia and the Despotate. Although Despot Đurađ secured a stronger initial position towards the Ottomans than the Bosnian ruler by arranging the marriage of his daughters, the despot's influence at the Porte was weighed by the quantity of silver from his mines. This is evidenced by the records from Ragusa in June 1433 when they complained to the despot about the obstruction of silver exports from the Despotate by the Ottomans.[473] At the same time, Broquière noted that Despot Đurađ was greatly subordinate to the sultan and that Murad II had significant material and military gains from the despot.[474] In 1432 and 1433, the Bosnian king had a clear understanding of the Ottoman intentions towards his state, however, Despot Đurađ was creating a false sense of security about his own position.

[473] Spremić, *Despot*, 188.

[474] Brokijer, *Putovanje preko mora*, 129-131.

The era of increased Ottoman presence (1434–1439)

At the end of 1433 and during 1434, the pretender Radivoj Ostojić stayed in Bosnia along with the legitimate king Tvrtko II. The positions of Tvrtko's rival in Bosnia were protected by the Ottomans, from whom no one in the state was immune. In May 1434, the Ottoman army commander, Ishak-bey, was present on Sandalj's territory, where he received gifts from the Ragusans.[475] During the Ottoman presence in Bosnia in 1434, the most prominent Bosnian nobles retreated to their courts and pursued a more peaceful policy based on securing possessions.[476] Increasing Ottoman activity in Bosnia appears to have led to the suspension of any relations between Bosnia and the Despotate. While the Bosnian king fought to protect his own life, in 1434, Despot Đurađ enjoyed the benefits of a two-year-old agreement with the Ottomans, which allowed him a more comfortable rule. Despite Tvrtko's precarious position, Đurađ did not engage in any form of causing harm, nor did he offer assistance to the Bosnian king.

The Ottoman pressure on Tvrtko II provoked a reaction from the Hungarians, who could not calmly observe the strengthening of Ottoman influence in Bosnia and the attempt to install Radivoj as Bosnian king. Hungarians were unable to renew peace with the Ottomans after the peace treaty expired in 1432. Sigismund's proposal, presented to Sultan Murad II, which included granting Wallachia, parts of Bulgaria, Bosnia, the Despotate, and parts of Albania to the Hungarian sphere of interest, did not constitute an offer that would significantly engage the Ottomans.[477] The Hungarian approach to Balkan states in the early 15th century was overshadowed by Sigismund's European ambitions. During the summer of 1434, Sigismund

[475] Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 171.

[476] (26. 2. 1434) (12. 4. 1434) (26. 5. 1434) (26. 6. 1434) (8. 11. 1424) Cons. Rog. V, 190v, 198v-199, 207, 211v, 229. (13. 11. 1434) Cons. Maius V, 2. (8. 1. 1434) (4. 2. 1434) (14. 12. 1434) Cons. Minus VI, 98v, 106v, 193v.

[477] Spremić, *Despot*, 190-191.

opted for a more aggressive approach to the situation in Bosnia, sending Matko Talovac with an army to consolidate the position of King Tvrtko II. After achieving certain military successes at the end of 1434, Talovac left Bosnia, accompanied by King Tvrtko II.[478]

At the beginning of 1435, Tvrtko stayed with Sigismund in Pozsony, where he took the vassal oath. During Tvrtko's stay with Sigismund, preparations were underway in Hungary for a state assembly scheduled for March 1435, where discussions were planned regarding the defense system of the vassals of the Hungarian crown against the Ottomans. At the latest in February 1435, as a Hungarian nobleman and despot, Đurađ went to the assembly. In mid-February, the Ragusans sent instructions to their envoys at Sigismund's court, to negotiate his recommendation for Ragusa with the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot.[479] A month later, the Ragusans once again addressed their envoys at Sigismund's court to negotiate concessions for their merchants, but this time only Despot Đurađ was present alongside the Hungarian king.[480] The stay of Tvrtko II and Đurađ with Sigismund is often characterized as an act of reconciliation orchestrated by the Hungarian king.[481] The brief instructions from Ragusa do not contain information of this nature, although it is possible that Sigismund, in order to secure his own state, sought to reconcile the feuding parties. Any potential conflicts on the border between Bosnia and the Despotate would certainly have had a negative impact on Sigismund's plans for a Hungarian defensive belt. In any case, in the following years after their meeting with Sigismund, there

[478] Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 255-257. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 318-320.

[479] "Ceterum quod dominus rex Bosne se contulit ad conspectum sacre maiestatis vestre, et, ut presensimus, eciam dominus Georgiu dispot Sclavonie ad eandem profecturus est. Supplicamu humillime, ut ipsis ambobus et utrique eorum dignetur maiestas vestra prelibata hanc civitatem suam et mercatores eius quam maxime commendare." (16. 2. 1435) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 389. Emir Filipović, "Boravak bosanskog kralja Tvrtka II Tvrtkovića u Beču tokom 1435. godine", *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta u Sarajevu* XVI/2, Sarajevo 2012, 232. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 320-323.

[480] (24. 3. 1435) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 390-391.

[481] Ćorović, *Historija*, 445. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 175. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 258. Dedić, "Relations Between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate", 58-59. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 321-323.

was no escalation of hostilities between Tvrtko II and Đurađ. At the assembly, Sigismund presented a plan for a defensive belt that included Usora, the Despotate, Wallachia, and Moldova. The Hungarian shield did not involve active engagement by the Bosnian ruler and, considering the fact that the Serbian despot was viewed as one of the key players in this plan, Sigismund's animosity and unequal attitude towards the Balkan rulers came to the fore once again. The Hungarian king emphasized that the gathered army would be organized for warfare against Ottomans, Hussites, and Bosnians, clearly drawing a line between his friends and enemies, placing Bosnian and Serbian rulers on opposite sides of the fence.[482] In the face of the Ottoman sword, Bosnia remained isolated due to the decisions of Hungarian foreign policy, inevitably complicating Bosnia's relationship with its neighboring states.

The death of Duke Sandalj in March 1435 led to new conflicts between the Pavlović family and Sandalj's successor, Duke Stjepan Vukčić. Along with these events, in the spring of 1435, Tvrtko II returned to the state from Hungary. Relying on Hungarian forces in Bosnia, which had a completely different perception of Bosnia's future that included the annexation of Hum to the Hungarian crown, Tvrtko once again found himself opposed to the Bosnian nobility and the anti-king, Radivoj. This was a short-lived episode in Bosnian history where the legitimate and self-proclaimed king, the Bosnian nobility, the Hungarians, and the Ottomans failed to gain the upper hand in terms of power and establish themselves as the decisive factor in shaping Bosnian internal politics. In this atmosphere, Tvrtko II returned to Hungarian territory in late 1435 and remained there until mid-1436.[483]

By the end of March 1435, the Ragusans were informing Sigismund about the movement of the Ottoman army from Sofia towards the territory of the Despotate.[484] The peace between the Despotate and the Ottoman

[482] Ignaz Aurelius Fessler, *Geschichte von Ungarn*, Tom I, Leipzig, 1867, 416-420. Petar Rokai, "Posljednje godine balkanske politike kralja Žigmunda (1435-1437)", *Godišnjak* XII/1, Novi Sad 1969, 91. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 273. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 122.

[483] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 266-267. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 8-10. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 172-173. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 263-264. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 326-330.

[484] (24. 3. 1435) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 390.

Empire, which had been reached three years earlier, was nearing its expiration in 1435. It was evident that the price of peace that the Serbian despot paid to the Ottomans was continuing to rise. The renewal of the peace treaty stipulated that Đurađ's daughter Mara and one of his sons would be sent to the sultan's court, a large dowry would be provided, and a substantial tribute would be paid each year.[485] Despite these initiatives, the Serbian despot's efforts to secure the sultan's favor were in vain. As part of his efforts to establish a more peaceful atmosphere for his state, Đurađ negotiated a peace treaty with the Venetians in mid-1435.[486]

The death of Duke Sandalj was sought to be exploited by the neighboring powers. In an unequal struggle, Duke Stjepan turned to the ever-interested Ottomans, who returned the Bosnian Kingdom in mid-1435.[487] While the Despotate remained relatively calm in terms of Ottoman activities, renewed conflicts in Bosnia led to disruptions in economic trade between the Despotate and Ragusa, causing damage to both sides.[488] The Ragusans tried to cautiously mediate for reconciliation. A diplomatic mission from Ragusa, sent to Despot Đurađ immediately after his return from Hungary, had the task of also visiting Duke Stjepan if he was located within four or five miles of their route. If they were to meet with Stjepan, they were to offer their services to him regarding the Serbian despot. However, they excluded the option of engaging with the despot if Kosača requested Đurađ's involvement against Radoslav. The same diplomatic mission from Ragusa was also supposed to visit Duke Radoslav if he was not too far away from the path they were traveling.[489]

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[485] About the dating of Mara Branković's marriage, see: Spremić, *Despot*, 220-223. Popović, *Mara Branković*, 75-82.

[486] (14. 8. 1435) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 80. Spremić, *Despot*, 212.

[487] Perojević, "Stjepan Tvrtko II. Tvrtković (opet)", 491-492. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 268-269. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 324-325.

[488] "esser disposto il senato contribuir il possibile per ridurlo in pace con Radoslvo Pavlovich, conoscendosi molto bene, che dalla loro uerra sarabbero derivate l'ultime rovine non solo ai loro stati, ma anche al resto della Slavonia" Restius, *Chronica*, 265.

[489] "Nel andar vostro al signor dispoto come detto. Se voiuoda Stipan non se retrouesse discosio dala via

The favorable political climate, characterized by division among Bosnian nobles, particularly facilitated the consolidation of Ottoman influence in the state. From the perspective of Ragusa, the strengthening of Ottoman influence in the states of Ragusan hinterland gave the impression that Đurađ's agreement with the Ottomans provided concrete assurance primarily in terms of Ottoman military inactivity in the Despotate's territory. When the Hungarians planned to undermine the sultan's position in spring 1436 by supporting the pretender Davud Çelebi, the Ragusan authorities appealed to Sigismund, requesting that the pretender refrain from stopping by Ragusa. The Ragusans justified their stance by emphasizing that his arrival would affect the Ottomans' treatment of Ragusan subjects engaged in trade in Bosnia, the Despotate, and Zeta, territories where the Ottomans had occupied certain towns and fortresses.[490] Though this formulation may contain an element of diplomatic exaggeration, it is clear that the Ottoman Empire held considerable influence in both states. Contracts for the transportation of merchant goods illustrate this situation as well. In one such contract, drawn up in February 1436, the Vlachs undertook to deliver goods to Višegrad, on the border between Bosnia and the Despotate, at their own risk, *excepto exercitu Theucrorum.*[491] After composing a letter to Sigismund, the Ragusan authorities wrote directly to Davud, seeking to present to him the danger posed by the Ottomans in Bosnia and the Despotate,

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vostra noma quatro o cinque miglia voliamo vi dobiate fratichare fin ad esso... Et se alguna cosa vi commetesse che douessino dire al signor dispoto la qual non fosse contra voiuoda Radossauo offereteui di farlo, ma se fosse contra voiouda Radossauo excusateui di çio" (8. 7. 1435) Lett. di Lev. XI, 254.

[490] "cuius mercatores negocia sua gerunt potissime in Sclavonia, Bosna et Zenta. In quibus partibus nulli latet, quanta dicio quantaque potencia Teucrorum et quantas vires capiaut cotidie, qu, si vera pro veris fateri voluimus, non modo ipsis in regionibus, in quibus potencius militant, plures civitates et oppida ocupavit … quantum eos exarcebaturos esse sperare possumus ad perniciem et oppressionem mercatorum nostrorum illis in regionibus Bosne, Sclavonie et Zente, in quibus periti sunt, dominantur et possunt." (4. 5. 1436) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 397-398. The document was recounted by the chronicler Resti. Restius, *Chronica*, 266-267.

[491] (14. 2. 1436) Div. Canc. IL, 222. Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 1045-1046. Kovačević, *Trgovina*, 64.

where they had occupied numerous towns and passes.[492] The Ragusans emphasized that the Ottomans were present in Bosnia, the Despotate, and on the borders of the Republic. They mentioned that a large number of people from Bosnia, the Despotate, Albania, and other states were coming to their town.[493] In correlation with the Ottomans, King Tvrtko II returned to Bosnia in the middle of 1436. With the help of Duke Stjepan, who was considered an Ottoman ally from the beginning of his independent political career, Tvrtko II managed to secure a degree of protection against Ottoman attacks, thereby neutralizing the main stronghold of power for the pretender Radivoj. Tvrtko's reorientation towards the Ottomans is a clear indicator of Sigismund's weakness. He was dealing with problems in Europe while the Ottomans were beginning to threaten the southern borders of Hungary.[494] One year after the despot's agreement with the Ottomans, when a part of the Branković family moved to the sultan's court, an agreement was reached between Bosnia and the Ottoman Empire, which cost the Bosnian king 25,000 ducats annually.[495]

The return of Tvrtko II and the establishment of peace with the Ottomans, with the assistance of Duke Stjepan, resulted in a new shift in power dynamics in Bosnia. A rapprochement took place in the second half of 1436 between the Bosnian king and Stjepan, leaving Duke Radoslav isolated,

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[492] "Impero me anno mandato da la magnificentia vostra per notifficarue che considerando come tutto lo auer de la citade de Ragusa e in Bosna e in Schiavonia e gran parte in Turchia, Albania e Romania perche li citadini e mercadanti Ragusini cum le lor persone e aueri e robe e mercantie senza le qual mercantie e traffegi la citade de Ragusa viuer non poria sono in le ditte contrade. Et come li Turchi signorizano per fina alli confini de Ragusa et che lor tieneno tutti li luogi e passi per li quali passano li nostra mercadanti con le lor mercantie e robe. E essi Turchi in Bosna e Schiavonia per tutto vieneno obediti come signori come se rendiamo certi la vostra magnificentia molto ben sia de zio informata" (5. 5. 1436) Lett. di Lev. XII, 26.

[493] "Il per che essa mia signoria vezando manifestamente se per lor non solamente tal passazo fosse dato ala magificientia vostra ma pur anchor recetto in Ragusa o in alguna parte dele sue tenute la qual cosa per algun modo secreta esser non poria. Conzo sia ogni zorno sono in Ragusa Bossignani, Schiaui, Greti, Albanexi et homeni de altre nation in gran quantita i quali sono subditi de li Turchi ouer de li baroni de Bosna" (5. 5. 1436) Lett. di Lev. XII, 26.

[494] Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 180-183.

[495] Ćorović, *Historija*, 449. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 180. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 264. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 330.

who unsuccessfully sought salvation through Ragusan mediation.[496] It was a calculated solution to the internal crisis, where Kosača gained the support of the Bosnian ruler, who immediately engaged against Duke Radoslav, while Tvrtko II benefited from Stjepan's involvement with the Porte. By reluctantly abandoning the pro-Hungarian orientation that he had held hopes for at least some time, the Bosnian king found a way out of the crisis by signing an unfavorable peace agreement with the Ottomans. Accepting the high price of peace also contributes to a clearer understanding of the difficult circumstances in Bosnia during the war with the despot in 1433. The failure of Sigismund's last attempt to annex territories under the Bosnian crown was formally concluded with the Hungarian recognition of Duke Stjepan's possessions in the second half of 1437.[497]

The weakening of Hungarian influence in Bosnia and the recognition of possessions in favor of Stjepan Vukčić are the result of Hungarian fighting on multiple fronts. After brief incursions in 1436, the Ottomans again threatened Hungary's southern borders in early 1437. In an effort to strengthen resistance against the Ottomans, the Hungarian army crossed the Danube and burned Kruševac in the middle of 1437. Shortly after this event, a battle took place between Ottoman and Hungarian forces near Smederevo, in which the Hungarians achieved more success. In order to enable military operations in the territory of the Despotate, Ottoman diplomacy invoked a clause from the agreement with Despot Đurađ from 1435, according to which Hungarian military units were not allowed to cross through the Despotate. By hastily conceding Braničevo to the Ottomans in the fall of 1437, Đurađ only temporarily slowed down the military attacks.[498] The Hungarian document of

[496] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 24.

[497] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 269. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 266.

[498] Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, I, 362. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 79-80. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 63. Momčilo Spremić, "Prvi pad Despotovine", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 244. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 197. Veselinović, *Država srpskih despota*, 139. Spremić, *Despot*, 241. Milomir Maksimović, "Srbi i Duga vojna 1443/1444. godine", *VIG* 1/2013, Beograd 2013, 47. The Ragusans wrote to Sigismund about the cession of Braničevo in early November 1437. (14. 11. 1437) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 404-405.

February 1437 indicates that during this time period, the inhabitants of the Despotate were largely migrating to Srem and the Bosnian territory, undoubtedly out of fear of the Ottomans.[499]

The Ottoman actions in 1438 clearly outlined their plans for Bosnia and the Despotate. Sultan Murad II's plans benefited from the change of power on the Hungarian throne, after Sigismund's death in 1437, when he was succeeded by his son-in-law Albert (1437-1439).[500] Meanwhile, the conflict between the Bosnian king and the nobility continued in Bosnia. In early November, the Ragusans informed Sigismund of the alliance between Tvrtko II and Stjepan against Duke Radoslav.[501] At the beginning of 1438, King Tvrtko withdrew from the war, and Kosača saw an opportunity for territorial expansion and reducing Radoslav's power in the future, as Radoslav appeared visibly weaker. Reconciliation attempts mediated by Ragusa, whose trade with Bosnia and the Despotate was usually disrupted during times of war, were not successful.[502] At the end of 1438, the Bosnian conflict provided fertile ground for the Ottoman army to re-enter Bosnia. While fighting against Radoslav during 1438, Stjepan Vukčić claimed that he was doing so with the sultan's permission. However, by the end of the year, his men had to seek protection within Ragusan territory from the Ottoman forces, who briefly acted as Radoslav's protectors.[503] Upon the arrival of the Ottomans, the trade routes to the Despotate were once again hindered. In mid-December 1438, the Ragusans informed their merchants in Srebrenica, the Despotate, and Bosnia not to transport silver through Kosača's territory until the situation changed.[504]

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499 (25. 2. 1437) Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, 159. Spremić, "Prvi pad Despotovine", 248.

500 Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 266-267.

501 (8. 11. 1437) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 405. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 25.

502 (13. 8. 1438) Cons. Rog. VI, 221.

503 Ćirković, *Herceg*, 25-30.

504 "de induciando in scribendo mercatores nostris ad partes Srebernize et Sclauonie super cautione adhibenda in argento mittendo Ragusium inde. Et hoc usque ad prima noua occurentia" (18. 12. 1438) Cons. Rog. VII, 3. "de scribendo merchatoribus nostris existentis in partibus Sclauonie, Strebrenize et Bosne quod non veniatur pro tenutas vayuode Stipani cum aliquibus argentis" (20. 12. 1438) Ibid., 3v.

Ottoman forces reentered Bosnia as part of a broader conquest policy that included the territory of Bosnia, the Despotate, and southern Hungarian borders. Ottoman troops carried out attacks in Erdély and invaded the northern parts of the Despotate, while Branković's core possessions in the south of the state were also threatened from other directions. In mid-1438, the Ottoman army achieved a series of victories, burning several towns and religious buildings in the Despotate. Đurađ had limited options and employed a tried-and-tested pattern of acknowledging territorial losses. Alongside the possessions he had lost a year earlier, during 1438, he acknowledged Ottoman authority over Ždrelo and Višesav on the Danube in order to achieve temporary peace.[505] Đurađ's actions in 1437 and 1438 reflected the weakness of the Despotate in the face of the Ottoman military force. With Sigismund's death, Despot Đurađ temporarily lost a significant ally and protector who had been the main support for the Despotate in its fight against the Ottomans. Finding himself in a position that Bosnian rulers had been in for decades, the Serbian despot helplessly witnessed the fragmentation of his state.

[505] Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, I, 362. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 88. Spremić, *Despot*, 246.

The attitude of Bosnian magnates towards the Ottoman occupation of the Despotate (1439-1444)

Uncertainty regarding the Ottoman presence on Duke Stjepan's territory continued into early 1439. Appeals from Stjepan's subjects to the Ragusan authorities were recorded, requesting possible refuge on Ragusan territory. In mid-January, the Ragusans anticipated that Stjepan, facing the Ottoman threat, might seek refuge on their territory.[506] In the same month, the Ragusan authorities made decisions to take measures to secure and arm Ston.[507] Both Ottoman and Radoslav's envoys were present in Ragusa during February. Pavlović's goal was to reclaim the territories taken from him by Kosača in previous conflicts. However, the Ottoman pressure on Stjepan did not last long as reconciliation between Stjepan and Radoslav took place by mid-1439.[508] The re-emergence of the Ottomans in Bosnia also prompted Radivoj Ostojić to become active, to whom the Ragusans sent gifts in mid-February.[509] By the end of April, the Ragusan authorities expressed gratitude to Duke Stjepan for the support provided by the Ottomans against Radivoj.[510] In the first half of 1439, the Ottoman tactics in Bosnia focused on fueling conflicts among the Bosnian nobility. Ragusans had information that the Ottomans threatened possible reconciliation between Bosnian nobles in order to prolong the conflict.[511] In addition to the southern regions of the Bosnian state, at the beginning of 1439, the Ottoman presence also left its mark in the central parts of the state. According to an anonymous chronicle,

[506] (19. 1. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 10.

[507] (24. 1. 1439) Lett. di Lev. XII, 119v. "de armando unum brigentinum pro mittendo ad custodiam Stagni et Puncte occaxione nouarum Teucrorum emergentium" (24. 1. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 12.

[508] Ćorović, *Historija*, 451. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 30-33.

[509] (14. 2. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 17v.

[510] (30. 4. 1439) Lett. di Lev. XII, 140.

[511] (30. 4. 1439) Lett. di Lev. XII, 139v.

during January 1439, the sultan's detachments invaded Bosnian territory and, ravaging the state, reached Jajce.[512] In mid-March 1439, the Ragusans discussed sending envoys and gifts to the Ottoman voivode Sebalia, who was believed to be located in Vrhbosna or Hodidjed.[513] As usual, Ragusa's interests were centered upon ensuring unhindered trade with Bosnia and neighboring states through Bosnian territory. In order to accomplish this, they expressed satisfaction with the fact that Sebalia was entrusted with guarding Bosnia's borders, referring to the border with the Despotate. Additionally, Ragusan instructions reflected the battles between the Bosnian and Ottoman armies near Jajce.[514] The Ottoman attacks on Bosnia in 1439 did not have a significant goal to accomplish. It seems that their presence in Bosnia was connected to potential attacks on the Despotate from Bosnian borders.

In mid-March 1439, we observe almost identical activities by Duke Stjepan and Despot Đurđe in Venice. Stjepan requested a boat from the Ragusans for the transportation of his envoys to Venice.[515] His requests were granted, and the Ragusans offered Ivaniš Ostojić as support for the envoys.[516] Kosača's envoys appeared before the Venetian Senate with a proposal to exchange Drijeva for Kotor, but Stjepan's proposal was rejected in mid-April.[517] In contrast, the Ragusan authorities responded positively to the Serbian despot's request for transportation of the envoys to Venice at the end of March.[518] Đurađ's envoys arrived in Venice by the end of April 1439, and it is possible that these

[512] Radivoj Radić, "Hronika o turskim sultanima kao izvor za istoriju Bosne", in: *Zemlja Pavlovića-Srednji vijek i period turske vladavine*, 335.

[513] "de mittendo unum de populo ad vayuodam Sebalia"; "de faciendo donum ipsi vayuode Sebalie"; "donando ipsi vayuode Sebalie yperperoris quingentos grossos in pannis et aliis rebus" (12. 3. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 26. About the same: Ibid., 26v, 28v.

[514] (March 1439) Lett. di Lev. XII, 125v-126v.

[515] "possendi dare barcham ambaxiatoribus vayuode Stipanii pro portando eos Venetiarum" (19. 3. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 34.

[516] (23. 3. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 38.

[517] (15. 4. 1439) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 116-117. At the end of April, the Ragusans learned of Stjepan's intentions against Ragusa in Venice. Seeking to verify the information, they sent instructions to their envoys at the court of Kosača. (30. 4. 1439) Lett. di Lev. XII, 139v-140.

[518] (28. 3. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 39v.

two groups of envoys met at that time in Venice. The despot's requests concerned the cession of Ulcinj, which Đurađ considered a strategically important place in the face of increasingly dangerous Ottoman attacks. However, the despot was also unsuccessful in negotiations with the Venetians, who adhered to equal criteria. In the second half of April, the Venetian Senate responded negatively to Đurađ's envoys' inquiries, emphasizing that Stjepan's proposals for the cession of Kotor were also not accepted.[519]

The Ottoman forces began attacking the Despotate on a much larger scale than they did with Bosnia. During March 1439, Despina and Despot Đurađ addressed the Ragusan authorities through couriers and envoys, who, among other things, tried to secure transport to Venice for their diplomats.[520] Numerous Ottoman detachments were already present on the territory of the Despotate at that time. Ragusans believed that this army was intended to attack the southern borders of Hungary. However, after seizing parts of the Despotate, Murad II launched an offensive with the aim of capturing the despot's capital. The Ottoman army was positioned near Smederevo by the end of spring, demanding that the town be surrendered. Realizing that the defensive forces and town walls would not be sufficient to protect their lives, Đurađ, along with his wife Irene and their younger son Lazar, left Smederevo and headed to Hungarian territory, where he sought to motivate the neighbors to wage war against the Ottomans.[521] The later Ragusan chronicle recorded that Despot Đurađ was expelled from the Despotate and Bosnia by *gran Turco Murat beg Zelebia*.[522] At the end of June, the Ragusans provided their subjects

[519] "Quia huc venit quidam orator illustris domini despoti Rassie, petens, ut ei dare vellimus locum Dulcigni. Ei respondeatur in consimili forma verborum, qua nos excusavimus oratoribus comitis Stephani, non dando eis Catarum. Et excusatio copiatur, quod non possumus ei assentre locim ipsum cum verbis oportunis et necesariis." (23. 4. 1439) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 117.

[520] "respondendi cursori domine Despine licentiando eum pro eis melius videbitur" (11. 3. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 25v. "consilio essendi et alloquendi cum ambaxiatore domini dispotti" (23. 3. 1439) Ibid., 37v. "de concedendo ambaxiatori domini dispoti Sclauonie unam ex duabus barchis que ire debebant ad Obroz pro eundo Venetiarum et ipsum ambaxiatori ibidem tranficetando" (28. 3. 1439) Ibid., 39v.

[521] Spremić, "Prvi pad Despotovine", 246. Spremić, *Despot*, 247-249. Maksimović, "Srbi i Duga vojna", 47.

[522] Ragnina, *Annales Ragusini Anonymi item Nicola de Ragnina*, Sumptibus academiae scientiarum et artium ex officina societatis typographicae, Zagreb 1883, 56.

in Novo Brdo with information about Ottoman troops' presence in various parts of the Despotate, advising them to be cautious.[523] They also reported on the Ottoman presence in Bosnia.[524] The defense of the capital was entrusted to the despot's elder son, Grgur, and Thomas Kantakouzenos. However, by the end of August 1439, the defenders capitulated, and the Ottoman army captured Smederevo.[525] For a certain period, the only place that resisted Ottoman attacks was Novo Brdo. The Ragusans sought to motivate their subjects in Novo Brdo to actively participate in the defense of the town.[526] Despot Đurađ did not find fertile ground in Hungary to launch an anti-Ottoman attack, as internal unrest in the state prevented King Albert from engaging more actively.[527]

Duke Stjepan's claims to the possessions of Despot Đurađ in Zeta

Parallel to the Ottoman attacks on Smederevo, no later than May 1439, Duke Stjepan Vukčić adopted a belligerent attitude towards Despot Đurađ. According to a letter from the Ragusan authorities in early June, it appears that they had limited information about the attack of Kosača's subjects on the despot's possessions. Due to the lack of detailed information, the Ragusan authorities asked their envoy to provide a more comprehensive report on these events.[528] The precise description of the territories devastated by

[523] "Mercadanti nostri de Nouaberda … perche ne vegnuto a notizia dello nouitade delli Turchi che sono in quelle parte de Schiauonia" (30. 6. 1439) Lett. di Lev. XII, 160.

[524] (13. 3. 1439.) (18. 5. 1439) Lett. di Lev. XII, 128, 143v.

[525] Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 232. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 362. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 91. Spremić, "Prvi pad Despotovine", 246. Maksimović, "Srbi i Duga vojna", 47. About Thomas Kantakouzenos, see: Božidar Ferjančić, "Vizantinci u Srbiji prve polovine XV veka", *ZRVI* XXVI, Beograd 1987, 192-193. Miloš Ivanović, "Foreigners in the Service of Despot Đurađ Branković on Serbian Territory", *Banatica* 26/2, Cluj-Napoca 2016, 258-260.

[526] Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 78.

[527] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 90. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 77.

[528] "E per lo simele abiamo intexo quello ne scriuesti de la nouitade et depredation fata nel paexe del signor dispoto per le gente et oste di voyuoda Stipan per la qualcosa altro non nepar adir per hora sapier saluo se altro seguira di nouo ala zornata ne auisareti per vostra lettera" (6. 6. 1439) Lett. di Lev. XII, 148.

Kosača's men is unknown, but it can be assumed that it was a border area. The Ragusans were also frightened by Stjepan's attack on the despot's possessions, and they sought protection from their sovereign, King Albert. As a response to Ragusans' pleas, the Hungarian king hired Ban Talovac to protect them.[529] In historiography, Stjepan's move towards Despot Đurađ was interpreted as an integral part of his vassal obligations towards Sultan Murad II.[530] However, it is entirely possible that Duke Stjepan, due to the situation at hand, carried out the attack on his own initiative. With the assault on Đurađ's possessions, the Bosnian duke initiated a new era of relations between the Kosača family and the Serbian despots. After several decades of cordial relations maintained by Duke Sandalj towards Despot Stefan and his successor Đurađ, Stjepan Vukčić established a new direction of political engagement by the Kosača family towards the Despotate in the mid-1439.

During the summer of 1439, a crisis of wider proportions erupted regarding the ownership of a part of Zeta that had been under the control of the Despotate since the 1420s. The issue was raised by Duke Stjepan, who had fully aligned himself with the Ottoman side and started attacking the remaining territories of the despot's land. In light of subsequent events, it appears that Stjepan's attack, mentioned by the Ragusans in early June, may have been directed at Zeta. In late June, a letter from the despot's Duke Komnin arrived in Ragusa from Bar.[531] It is certain that the Duke of Bar was preparing to defend his possessions. The Ragusans permitted him to purchase a larger quantity of weapons at the end of June, but at the beginning of July, they rejected additional requests from his envoys.[532] Towards the end of June, Duke Stjepan involved the Kotor rector in the issue of Zeta, proposing a joint attack on the despot's territories. The situation was further complicated by the Crnojević family, who sought Venetian protection because of

[529] (6. 6. 1439) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 117. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 428.

[530] Ćorović, *Historija*, 455. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 271. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 46.

[531] (25. 6. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 69v.

[532] (27. 6. 1439) (5. 7. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 70v, 74v.

Duke Stjepan.[533] According to available sources, the Bosnian duke at this time did not emphasize the legitimacy of his activities in Zeta by the fact that he was married to Balša's daughter, but he probably implied it. Stjepan's actions during the Ottoman occupation of the Despotate found legitimacy in his military strength and the fact that he had built a good standing with the Porte.[534] It seems that the Venetian subjects in Zeta were also interested in attacking the neighboring areas. In early July, the Venetian Senate ordered the Kotor rector not to take any action against possessions recognized as under the despot's rule without the authorities' orders. Although the Venetians had a signed truce with Despot Đurađ, the Venetian Senate emphasized that this agreement did not oblige them to assist the despot's subjects.[535] Venetian caution and their efforts to maintain a neutral stance between the despot's subjects and Kosača's ambitions were largely conditioned by the peace agreement between the Venetians and the Ottomans. The situation in Zeta at the beginning of the Ottoman conquest of the Despotate is also mentioned by the chronicler Resti, who states that the local population from the despot's territories in Zeta crossed the border and sought refuge on Bosnian territory, mainly on Duke Stjepan's possessions.[536]

Despot Đurađ found himself in an interesting situation in September 1438 and July 1439 concerning a dispute between Duke Radoslav and the Ragusan authorities. During the conflict between Pavlović and Kosača, after Sandalj's death, Stjepan managed to seize Trebinje, obtaining charters and other documents issued by Ragusa to Pavlović. In the absence of these doc-

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[533] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 46. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 273. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 207. Kalić, *Srbi u poznom srednjem veku*, 164.

[534] Stjepan considered the attack on Pavlović's possessions from May 1440 as part of Ottoman orders. (4. 5. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 185.

[535] Nicolai Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir al historie des croisades au XVe siecle*, III, Paris, 1902, 45.

[536] "Il conte, ostentando gelosie, e promovendo differenze, mostrava una indicibil cecita, non vedendo, che mentre egli si voleva ingrandir con quello degli altri, andava spianando la strada alla perdita delli suoi stati. Ogni giorno il Turco cresceva nelle provincie slave, e dalla Zenta, lasciando a'tianchi la Servia, s'era intruso in qualche porzione orientale della Bossina, imminente alli stati del conte Stefano." Restius, *Chronica*, 274.

uments, Radoslav was unable to retrieve his deposited property in Ragusa. To strengthen his position with the Ragusans, Duke Radoslav appealed to King Tvrtko II, asking him to confirm the validity of his claims.[537] In addition to Radoslav's correspondence as a guarantor, Despot Đurađ, a respected neighbor of the Ragusan authorities, also got involved.[538] This move by the despot, taken at a time when he was expelled from his own state and in a precarious situation, illustrates the continuation of the cordial relationship between Pavlović and Branković. The situation between Duke Radoslav and Ragusa was resolved in August 1439.[539] At that time, all that remained for Đurađ of the Despotate were the threatened possessions around Novo Brdo and in Zeta. In early August 1439, the defenders of Novo Brdo were defeated by Ottoman forces in a battle, but the town did not fall.[540] It appears that the Ottomans did not significantly tighten their grip on the town for some time. In late October, the Ragusans provided a boat to transport envoys from Novo Brdo to Hungary, to King Albert and Despot Đurađ.[541] The following month, they also discussed sending new information from the Despotate

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[537] (17. 4. 1438) (23. 4. 1438) (28. 4. 1438) (28. 5. 1438) Cons. Rog. VI, 190v, 191v, 194, 199.

[538] "Ser Andreas de Volzio, ser Georgius de Goze et ser Steffanus de Zamagno, ellecti fuerunt officiales ad formandum poveliam quam fame debet dominus dispottus nomine vayuode Radossaui" (15. 9. 1438) Cons. Minus VII, 252. "possendi respondere ambaxiatorum vayuode Radossaui quia dantibus nobis in plena et sufficienta forma priuilegia receptione depositi quod habet in comuni nostro ipse vayuode Radossauus. Et ipsis etiam fieri facientibus in plena et sufficienti forma a domino dispotto priuilegia et literas cum pendentibus bulis manifestacionis" (15. 9. 1438) Cons. Rog. VI, 227. "de firmando poueliam formatam super atestacione fienda pro domino dispotum receptione depositi voyuode Radossaui" (17. 9. 1438) Ibid., 227v. "de dando libertatem domino Rectori et suo minori consilio possendo firmare poueliam depositi vayuode Radossaui" Ibid. "respondendi Iuanius Crebeglianouich ambaxiatore voyuode Radossaui circa eius ambaxiati nostro dominio expositam in hunc modum, videlicet, offerendi et soluendi eidem nomine eius domini prefati prode denariorum et tribute Canalis quos petit et habet in nostro commune dante nobis expeditorias superinde in opportuna forma confectas. Et similiter offerendi sibi capitale ipsorum denariorum in nostro comune existentis dante nobis ipso cartas obligatoria principales quas sibi fecit dominium nostrum aut ostendente gurenticias a domino dispoti susceptas cum solemnitatibus quas sibi alias ad nostrum dominium edixit fiendas superinde" (8. 7. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 75.

[539] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 637-641.

[540] Spremić, *Despot*, 253.

[541] (28. 10. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 96v. They issued a similar permit a month later. (14. 11. 1439) Ibid., 102.

to the Hungarian court.[542] In October 1439, Hungarian King Albert passed away.[543] With the death of the Hungarian king, who had plans for an anti-Ottoman war, the position of Despot Đurađ was made even more difficult. By the end of 1439, the despot was still in Hungary. In early December, the Ragusans discussed sending letters to the despot, Queen Elizabeth, and Ban Talovac.[544] The Serbian despot sought a way out of this difficult situation by aiming to claim the Hungarian crown for himself or one of his sons.[545] The Ragusans were already aware of the despot's ambitions for the Hungarian throne by mid-December 1439.[546] The despot's eldest son, Grgur, was still in the Despotate in December, and the Ragusans sent him a request to look after their merchants.[547] Apart from Stjepan's involvement in Zeta, the activities of the remaining Bosnian nobility and King Tvrtko II during the immediate Ottoman occupation of the Despotate are unknown. With the fall of Smederevo in mid-1439, despite the remaining small possessions, the Despotate formally ceased to exist. With the fall of the Despotate, the barrier that had to some extent filtered Ottoman advances towards the Bosnian Kingdom also disappeared for a certain period of time.

Despot Đurađ in the Bosnian neighborhood

In early 1440, the situation in Zeta became further complicated with the involvement of the Venetians in the conflict over Despot Đurađ's possessions in this region. Venetian interference was initiated by their subjects in Kotor who wrote to the Venetian Senate regarding Venetian engagement in Budva and neighboring areas, in order to prevent Ottoman occupation of these territories. At that time, the despot's envoys arrived in Venice, presenting Đurađ's ambitious plan for being crowned with the Hungarian

[542] (24. 11. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 105.

[543] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 91.

[544] (1. 12. 1439) Cons. Minus VIII, 110. Cons. Rog. VII, 106v.

[545] (2. 1. 1440) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 118.

[546] Spremić, *Despot*, 272.

[547] (22. 12. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 113.

crown. The Senate presented the envoys with a proposal from the Kotor nobility regarding the occupation of the mentioned places, but the specific response from the other side is unknown. The despot's envoys aimed to make another attempt to obtain Ulcinj from the Venetians, but all Đurađ's envoys managed to secure was permission for the despot's family to come to Venetian territory.[548] It is certain that even during his stay in Hungary, the despot had no intention of giving up his possessions in Zeta, which, along with the Novo Brdo region, represented the last refuge of the Branković family. Another claimant to Zeta, Duke Stjepan, arranged for his envoys to be transported to Venice by the Ragusan authorities in early January 1440.[549]

The Venetians did not take the despot's ambitions to be crowned with the Hungarian crown seriously, and the course of events in the following months proved them right. The marriage of Hungarian Queen Elizabeth to Polish King Władysław III (1434/1440–1444) was arranged in early 1440. Additional complications arose with the birth of Albert's son, for whom the Hungarian queen sought to secure the throne. In the confusing times of Hungarian internal politics, Đurađ found himself on the side of Elizabeth and the Cili family. After the victory of Władysław III's faction and his coronation in mid-March 1440, the Branković family had no choice but to retreat to their possessions in Zeta.[550] It was during this time that the Ragusans reported to Elizabeth about the attacks in the Ragusan neighborhood carried out by Duke Stjepan under the sultan's orders. These were a repetition of the long-standing conflicts between the Kosača and Pavlović families.[551] Being in close proximity to the queen, Despot Đurađ could have access to the Ragusans' reports, which made it easy to conclude that Kosača would exploit the Ottoman encouragement to attack his possessions once again.

Ragusans were not interested in continuing the conflict near their borders, and they unsuccessfully attempted to mediate for the reconciliation of

[548] (2. 1. 1440) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 118.

[549] (3. 1. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 117v.

[550] Spremić, *Despot*, 274. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 281.

[551] (7. 3. 1440) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 428-430.

Bosnian nobles in April 1440.[552] The Ottoman's favorable attitude towards Duke Stjepan had severe consequences for all his neighbors. The Ragusans observed his activities with some apprehension and tried to host Kosača in Ragusa in the spring of 1440,[553] but the visit did not take place.[554] A few days later, the Ragusan authorities sent a letter to their envoy at Stjepan's court, attempting to invite him once again. The opportune moment for a discussion with Bosnian nobles was based on the fact that an envoy from Pavlović's court was staying with Stjepan in early May. The Ragusans sought to illustrate the danger of their internal conflict which would be beneficial for the Ottomans. They also emphasized how the nobles, through their actions, were securing a fate for the Bosnian Kingdom similar to what had recently befallen the Despotate, Bulgaria, Romania, and Albania, while also mentioning the difficult circumstances facing the Branković family. By recalling the recent past of neighboring states, the Ragusans sought to open the eyes of the most influential Bosnian political figures, according to their accounts.[555] In addition to serving Ottoman policy, Kosača's ambitions extended far beyond the local conflict with Radoslav. During the spring of 1440, Stjepan corresponded with the Kotor rector.[556] The Kotor nobility at that time was considered a significant factor in Zeta issue. Apart from initiating Venetian involvement and corresponding with Duke Stjepan, at the beginning of June 1440, a resident of Kotor went to Venice on behalf of the despot,[557] indicating the complexity of the still-diplomatic issue that, according to available sources, could only be superficially observed. The Ragusan authorities did not abandon the despot's subjects in Zeta. They

[552] (29. 4. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 144.

[553] (19. 4. 1440) (30. 4. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 178-178v, 183-184.

[554] (4. 5. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 184-186.

[555] "como ben si vede per exempli d'altri et maxime in li signori de Schiavonia, de Bulgaria, Romania et Albania et in lo dispoto e figlioli et altri infiniti i quali se vede como ano capitati et capitano ala zornata per le lor diuisione discordie et excessive spexe" (4. 5. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 185v.

[556] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 47.

[557] (1. 6. 1440) Iorga, *Notes* III, 60.

allowed Duke Komnin to export grain from Ragusa to Bar,[558] while informing him of the arrival of Stefan Maramonte a few months later.[559] Towards the end of April, the Ragusans engaged in correspondence, which is not known in detail, with *presbytero nuntio Ducayni*, who wanted to go to the despot.[560] Stefan Maramonte represented a key figure through whom Stjepan Vukčić sought to strengthen his influence in Zeta against the despot. In the first half of September, Kosača tried to obtain *salvum conductum* from the Venetian authorities for Maramonte, who was supposed to pass through their territories. The Venetians, however, were aware of the potential danger of their alliance and rejected this request. Along with this demand, Stjepan unsuccessfully attempted to acquire Kotor from the Venetians and only managed to obtain a recommendation from the Venetian envoys at the Porte to the sultan.[561]

Despot Đurađ, along with part of his family, traveled in the spring of 1440 from Hungarian territory through Venetian possessions to arrive in Ragusa by summer.[562] During his journey, the Ragusans made every effort to provide Đurađ with all necessary services. They determined amounts for hospitality, set aside supplies for his entourage,[563] and facilitated transportation for his envoys traveling to Venice.[564] Those envoys were the ones who once again failed in their efforts to persuade the Venetians to grant Ulcinj, which, according to all indications, was of considerable significance to Đurađ's plans in the fight for survival.[565] In the summer of 1440, the

[558] (11. 4. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 145v. Earlier, they issued a similar permit to the Budva castellan. (8. 1. 1440) Ibid., 129v.

[559] (10. 6. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 168v.

[560] (26. 4. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 155v.

[561] (13. 9. 1440) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 123.

[562] Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 119, 120. Jelka Ređep, "Dubrovnik, utočište srpskih despota Brankovića", *ZMSS* 36, Novi Sad 1989, 100.

[563] (22. 6. 1440) Cons. Maius VI, 37v. (18. 6. 1440) (21. 6. 1440) (23. 6. 1440) (27. 6. 1440) (1. 7. 1440) (21. 7. 1440) (23. 7. 1440) (27. 7. 1440) Cons. Minus VIII, 169, 169v, 170, 171v, 173, 177, 178, 178v, 179. (18. 6. 1440) (20. 6. 1440) (21. 6. 1440) (27. 6. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 169v, 170v, 171, 172, 174.

[564] (25. 6. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 173v. (27. 6. 1440) Cons. Maius 39v.

[565] (25. 6. 1440) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 122.

Venetian Senate was overwhelmed by the demands of both the despot and Stjepan. The Ragusans maintained the same criteria for both of them. In July and August, they allowed boats for the transportation of Stjepan's envoy, Grupko, who was heading to Venice.[566] Although he was hosted by the Ragusan authorities with his entourage, the despot's ultimate destination was Bar.[567] At the end of July, the Ragusan authorities arranged a boat for their transportation with extensive security measures.[568] During his stay in Zeta, Đurađ sought to win over Stefanica Crnojević to his side.[569] With the despot's arrival in Zeta, Duke Stjepan temporarily slowed down his armed attacks.[570]

With the ascension of the new Hungarian king, Władysław, an anti-Ottoman campaign was proclaimed. There was a constant threat to the southernmost Hungarian territories. Belgrade, in particular, was in a dire situation as it was under Ottoman siege. Sharing King Władysław's view on the need for more active engagement against the Ottomans, Tvrtko II sent a special envoy proposing a joint effort between Bosnia and Hungary.[571] For a certain period, the Serbian despot was excluded from the Hungarian plans for organizing the fight against the Ottomans. Antagonism between the Hungarian court and Đurađ continued. Władysław accused the despot of rebellion and treason in two charters issued in August and October of 1440.[572]

Changes to the existing moderate patterns occurred in September 1440 when the Ottoman and Stjepan's envoys arrived in Ragusa. The Ragusan authorities informed the Serbian despot of the arrival of the Ottoman envoys.[573] They also informed their subjects in Drijeva, Luka, Konjic, and

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[566] (6. 7. 1440) (9. 8. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 175, 182v.

[567] (23. 7. 1440) (28. 7. 1440) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 452-453.

[568] (26. 7. 1440) Cons. Maius VI, 41v, 42. (27. 7. 1440) (30. 7. 1440) (1. 8. 1440) Cons. Minus VIII, 179, 180, 180v. (25. 7. 1440) (28. 7. 1440) (6. 8. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 179v, 181, 182. (6. 8. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 192-192v.

[569] Spremić, *Despot*, 281.

[570] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 273.

[571] Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 271-274.

[572] Spremić, *Despot*, 288.

[573] (22. 9. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 193v.

Podvisoki about this visit. The Ottoman envoys demanded that the Ragusan authorities send envoys to the sultan and pay tribute. In this situation, the Ragusan authorities sought the advice of Duke Stjepan, who advised them to send envoys without paying tribute.[574] Ragusan authorities delayed sending envoys to Sultan Murad II for several months. Meanwhile, they continued to assist Despot Đurađ, who was staying in Bar and Budva at that time.[575] During October, they allowed the export of grain from Ragusa to Đurađ's settlements in Zeta.[576] The following month, the Ragusan authorities dispatched envoy Georgi Goze, who was supposed to stay longer in Zeta.[577] Goze addressed the authorities, conveying the despot's complaints about Duke Stjepan's actions. According to a letter sent to the envoy in mid-October, the despot feared the fact that Kosača had built a brigantine and two boats in Drijeva. Đurađ possessed information about the preparations for an attack on his possessions that the duke was planning to carry out by sea and land. The Ragusan authorities reassured Đurađ, writing that the information was not entirely accurate, emphasizing that Stjepan, to their knowledge, was still in the early stages of shipbuilding. They also highlighted the fact that Kosača currently had an insufficient number of boats and would not be able to launch an attack on the despot in the near future. During this visit, they expressed concern about the despot's towns in Zeta lacking adequate provisions, advising him to resolve the issue as soon as possible.[578] During 1441, Luka Brajković from Ragusa, a crossbow expert, stayed with Duke Stjepan,

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[574] (1. 10. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 201.

[575] (23. 9. 1440) (20. 10. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 194-195.

[576] (10. 10. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 195v. (12. 10. 1440) Cons. Maius VI, 55.

[577] (7. 11. 1440) (8. 11. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 198v, 199v. (7. 11. 1440) (9. 11. 1440) Cons. Minus VIII, 202, 202v. Completion of the diplomatic mission: (28. 11. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 203.

[578] "aueti abuta la informatione che vayuoda Stipan uno brighentino et certe barche aueua fato in Neretua per vegnire contrade voy per terra et per aqua … [206v] … deto vayuoda a fato tayar lo legname per far uno ouer doy brighentini de remi ottanta mallo legname anchora parte e nello boscho vero e che se dise che presto dara ordene che se debia fare … et delle barche non e veritade che lo deto vayuoda abia in ponto algune barche par tal fazenda … perche sono pizole [207]" (16. 11. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 206v-207.

undoubtedly tasked with increasing Kosača's arsenal of weapons.[579] In early December, the Ragusan authorities finally sent an envoy to Sultan Murad II with a letter explaining the payment of tribute to the Bosnian crown and justifying their reception of the despot in Ragusa. They requested the sultan to order the Bosnians and his own people to adhere to the agreement and to treat them as they had done in the Despotate. They implored the sultan to order the opening of blocked passes and roads that hindered trade.[580] Ragusans' pleas and explanations, however, were in vain since the sultan refused to listen to them because they refused to pay tribute.[581]

At the end of 1440, we observe the movement of Olivera, the sister of Despot Stefan Lazarević and relative of Đurađ Branković, between the possessions of Duke Stjepan, Ragusa, and Zeta. There are indications that during this time Olivera was staying with her sister Jelena, the widow of Sandalj Hranić. At the Kosača court, Olivera had a cousin, Stjepan's wife Jelena, who was from the Balšić family. In late October, the Ragusans arranged a boat for *domine Despine*.[582] However, it appears that she did not visit Ragusa at that time. By the end of December, a decision was made to send a boat from Ston to pick up Olivera, who would be transported to Ragusa, where she would stay for the next six months.[583] Upon her arrival, the Ragusans considered the option of covering her expenses[584] and arranged for her messenger to be transported to Despot Đurađ in Zeta.[585] By analyzing Olivera's movements in the context of the Ragusan councils, we cannot speculate further about her involvement in the communication between Stjepan and Đurađ. During this period, there is no recorded engagement of

[579] Đurđica Petrović, "Uloga Dubrovnika u snadbijevanju srednjovekovne Bosne oružjem XIV-XV vek", in: *Srednjovjekovna Bosna i Evropska kultura*, Izdanja Muzeja grada Zenice III, Zenica 1973, 72.

[580] Lett. di Lev. XII, 213-218.

[581] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 100.

[582] (26. 10. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 197.

[583] (27. 12. 1440) (31. 12. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 215v, 216. Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 238.

[584] (4. 1. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 217.

[585] Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 58. Purković, *Kćeri kneza Lazara*, 111.

the ladies from the Kosača court, Sandalj's widow and Stjepan's wife, in the issues concerning Zeta and the conflict with the Serbian despot.

At the beginning of 1441, the shadow of the fall of the Despotate descended more and more towards the Bosnian Kingdom. Having solidified their control over the northern and southern regions of the Despotate, entrusted to the former governor of Skopje, Ishak-bey, and his son Isa-bey,[586] the Ottoman military forces increasingly dominated the political and economic spheres of the Bosnian state. Throughout January 1441, the Ragusans made several attempts to establish contact with Duke Radoslav. It seems that the possessions of the Pavlović family were under significant Ottoman pressure at this time. This is evidenced by Ragusan's attempt to secretly send their nobleman from Srebrenica, Michael Volzo, along with two officials to the court in Borač under the pretense of engaging in trade. The scant instructions from the Ragusan authorities, shrouded in secrecy, prevent a more detailed description of the correspondence, which likely pertained to the Ottoman presence in the region.[587] In Zeta, Despot Đurađ was concerned about his own wealth, part of which he had deposited in Ragusa through Metropolitan Atanasije in January.[588] The transfer of money from Zeta to Ragusa clearly illustrates Đurađ's position during the first months of 1441 on his only remaining possession. While the despot stayed in Zeta, the Ragusans sought to maintain contact

[586] Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 79

[587] "Per che abiamo intexo che vuy sete per vegnir presto a Ragusa non obstante vi fosse al quanto straman del anima vostra fina meza zornata vi dobiate voltar fina a voyuoda Radossauo a la presentia del qual zonto che sereti humanamente lo salutereti per parte dela nostra signoria" (5. 1. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 5v. In the middle of the month, Michael Volzo from Srebrenica was appointed for this task. (19. 1. 1441) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 456. His mission has been prepared for a long time. (24. 3. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 245. (28. 3. 1441) Ibid., 244v. "Perche lo prefato signor voyuoda Radossauo ne asignificato et pregato che li vogliamo mandar alguna persona fidelita per la qual ne vol mandar a di certa parlamente de credenza … Ala presentia del qual zonto che sereti salutatilo humanamente per parte dela nostra signoria con quello debito salute se conuien et presentandoli la lettere de credenza la qual vi si mando scripta in lettera schiaua per lo presente coriero li auereti a die per parte nostra signoria … lo detto signor non nominando in la lettera ne scriuereti el nome suo pro ogni rispeto ma digando l'amigo sa la vostra signoria" (31. 1. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 6.

[588] (13. 1. 1441) (23. 1. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 218v, 221.

and kept him informed of the news in the Despotate and its surroundings.[589]

The Ottoman threat was also felt in other territories. In early March, the Ragusans listened to news and suspicions about the Ottoman army through their officials in Slano, where an order was issued for additional fortification of the walls and the withdrawal of the population within the town.[590] Along with these preparations, trade with Bosnia and the Despotate was suspended in mid-March.[591] Consequently, Ragusa's financial budget was impacted, resulting in the Ragusan authorities adopting a more active diplomatic approach through which we are able to learn more about the events of that period. In March, the authorities instructed their envoys at the Porte to demand Murad II release Ragusan merchants in the Despotate, Bosnia, and Srebrenica. This was done in order to invoke the freedoms previously granted to Ragusan merchants by the sultan under the fortress of Smederevo. The issues surrounding the disputes between Ragusa and the Ottomans at the time centered around the refusal to pay tribute, which Ragusa justified by claiming that they could not do so because neighboring rulers would demand the same.[592] Simultaneously, envoys were also sent to Duke Radoslav, demanding that he cease executing the sultan's orders, which included arresting Ragusan merchants.[593]

The Ragusans saw the easing of tension in the reconciliation between Duke Stjepan and Despot Đurađ, with whom they maintained contact in early March 1441.[594] It appears that the despot, whose position in Zeta was deteriorating, took the initiative for reconciliation. In early March, the Ragusans offered their mediation in achieving peace and wrote to Stjepan about the importance of restoring the Despotate, which would once again serve as a good shield for Bosnia and Hungary.[595] The Bosnian duke was not interest-

[589] (3. 1. 1441) (4. 1. 1441) (10. 2. 1441) (3. 3. 1441) (6. 3. 1441) (9. 3. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 217, 217v, 222v, 232, 233v, 234, 236.

[590] (2. 3. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 7.

[591] (16. 3. 1441) Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi", 34.

[592] (22. 3. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 16-16v.

[593] (22. 3. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 18.

[594] (6. 3. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 233. (5. 3. 1441) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 457.

[595] "chome se a exempio de molti signori passati per ho la mia signoria considerando che lo signore

ed in reconciling with Đurađ because he felt a favorable climate for gaining new territories. Just a few days after Ragusans' letter, Kosača was purchasing equipment for his new brigantine in Ragusa and stocking up on weapons and provisions.[596] In the second half of March, the Ragusan authorities informed the despot of the failure of *supra factis suis a voyuodam Stipano*.[597] During those days, the Ragusans in a letter to Duke Stjepan inquired about his course of action if Sultan Murad II ordered him to attack Ragusa, pleading with him not to take any action against them in such a scenario.[598] Ragusans' fears were not mere contemplation, but directly related to their plans. On the same day they drafted instructions for their envoy at Duke Stjepan's court, the Ragusans decided to receive the despot's property for safekeeping, offer him four boats, and a house for residence in Ragusa.[599] In the following days, they discussed proposals for hosting and entertaining Despot Đurađ and his entourage.[600] These decisions indicate that the Ragusans were planning the despot's arrival and subtly gauging Kosača's stance on the matter. At the end of March, a galley was assigned to the despot's Metropolitan at his expense.[601] Additionally, it was decided to apologize to Stjepan's envoy, Grupko, for not being able to sell weapons.[602]

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despotto stagando nella signoria de Schiauonia della qual le chazato esser bon scudo alla Ungaria et anche alla Bosina et per lo simel voy esser bono schudo alla zitade nostra scutendo certa diferentia et inimicicia esser nata fra la magnificencia vostra et lo prefato signore despoto et desiderando come amico dell una parte et del altra vedi fra de voy bona paxe et unitade per euitare ogni mal effetto" (7. 3. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 14.

[596] (9. 3. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 235.

[597] (23. 3. 1441) Con. Rog. VII, 244v.

[598] (23. 3. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 20-20v.

[599] "de acceptando depositum quod deponere intendit et petit deponi in nostrum comune dominus despot."; "de offerendo dicto domino dispoto quatuor barchis" (23. 3. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 244. "pro dando et concedendo domino dispoto unam domum ad affictum ad annum et rationem anni expensis nostri comunis" Ibid., 244v.

[600] (30. 3. 1441) (10. 4. 1441) (11. 4. 1441) (12. 4. 1441) (17. 4. 1441) (18. 4. 1441) (22. 4. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 248, 252, 253, 253v, 256, 256v, 260.

[601] (30. 3. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 249.

[602] (30. 3. 1441) Cons Rog. VII, 248. The Ragusan authorities once again in late May 1441 refused to allow Duke Stjepan to export weapons. (25. 5. 1441) Ibid., VIII, 10v.

In early April 1441, the Ragusan authorities were already preparing galleys at the despot's request.[603] By the middle of the month, Đurađ was already in Ragusa with his wife and entourage. Due to Ottoman pressure on the local population, Đurađ had abandoned his possessions in Zeta. After the despot's departure to Ragusa, Murad II deported his sons to Asia Minor, where they were blinded for corresponding with their father and planning an anti-Ottoman attack.[604] A few days later, the Ragusan authorities granted him a weekly allowance of 30 perpers for support.[605] By accepting Despot Đurađ within their walls and working towards his reconciliation with Duke Stjepan, the Ragusans sought to improve Đurađ's extremely difficult situation. Just a few days after his arrival, the Ragusans once again expressed their fears to the Talovac brothers that the despot's stay in their town would be used by Duke Stjepan to attack Ragusa, using the pretext of a sultan's order.[606] In the following days, everyone prepared for the upcoming events in their own way. Duke Stjepan managed to engage one foist[607] from the Ragusans, while the despot, through the mediation of the Ragusan authorities, managed to establish contact with the Crnojević family. However, despite extensive correspondence that lasted until the end of May 1441, he vainly hoped for the arrival of their envoy in Ragusa.[608] The situation did not significantly change regarding the revival of trade. In mid-April, it was decided that merchants could travel to Bosnia and the Despotate, but they

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603 (6. 4. 1441) (10. 4. 1441) Cons. Minus VIII, 244v, 245, 245v, 246. "Comentemoui che con lo nome del Dio e del glorioso martire protector nostro misser san Biaxio siando spazato de qua vi dobiate partire e con presteza et solicitudine andaruene con lo detta galea verso Buda doue sentireti esser e prefato signor dispoto" (April 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 22.

604 Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 83. Momčilo Spremić, "Despot Stefan Branković slepi", *Glas* SANU CDXIV, Beograd 2010, 119-120. These news were not immediately known. The Ragusans expressed their sympathies to Despot Đurađ and his wife for this event in late 1442. (31. 12. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 189.

605 (18. 4. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 256v.

606 (19. 4. 1441) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 433. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 100.

607 (27. 4. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 263v.

608 (24. 4. 1441) (25. 4. 1441) (30. 4. 1441) Cons. Rog VII, 260v, 261, 264. (23. 5. 1441) (27. 5. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 9, 11v.

were still not allowed to carry valuable items with them.[609] During his stay in Ragusa in early May 1441, the despot unsuccessfully sought Ragusa's mediation with Duke Stjepan and Duke Radoslav.[610]

The Ragusans' fears regarding the Ottoman reaction to the despot's stay in Ragusa came true in late May 1441 when the Ottoman envoys arrived in their town, reprimanding them for hosting Despot Đurađ within their walls.[611] On the following day, the Ragusan authorities decided to present the despot with letters from the Ottoman envoys.[612] The Republic was facing serious problems. In late May and early June, the recruitment of mercenaries took place,[613] and measures were taken to secure the region of Konavle, emphasizing that the Ragusan subjects could not seek refuge in the Pavlovićs' and Kosačas' teritorries because, as Ottoman vassals, they were unable to protect them.[614] Olivera also stayed in Ragusa with Despot Đurađ, but she departed for Budva in mid-June.[615]

In late July 1441, Kosača sent a letter, of which we do not know the details, to the Ragusan authorities, informing them about the developments regarding the Ottoman envoys who were at his court. From the decision of the Senate, it is evident that Stjepan proposed bribing Ottoman officials as a solution to the situation, to which the councilors undoubtedly agreed

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609 Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi", 34.

610 The Ragusan Senate discussed the secret petition sent by the Serbian despot, it was decided not to send envoys to Duke Stjepan's court, and Đurađ was informed of that decision."de excusando nos a peticione secreta facta per dominum dispotum nostro dominio et de regratiando sibi pro ea"; "faciendi dictam excusationem et regratiationem cum illis melioribus et habilioribus verbis et modo quibus sibi videbiter conuenire pro ipsa peticione"; Decision was not adopted: "de sequendo ambaxiatam mittendam ad voyuodam Stipanum et voy. Radossauum"; Decision was not adopted: "de deliberando supra ambaxiatam mittenda ad voyuodam Stipanum et ad voyuodam Radossauum"; "respondendi domino dispoto in facto dicte ambaxiate et scribendi voyuode Radossauo Paulouich superinde prout arrengatum fuit in presenti consilio" (5. 5. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 2v.

611 Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 87.

612 (26. 5. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 11v.

613 (22. 5. 1441) Cons. Maius VI, 109v. (27. 5. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 26-27v.

614 (8. 6. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 28.

615 (18. 4. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 257. (19. 6. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 17v. (20. 6. 1441) Cons. Maius VI, 115.

and set an amount of 300 ducats.[616] In the coming days, the Ragusans prepared for broader diplomatic activities. A decision was made to send letters to King Tvrtko II, Duke Radoslav, and Ban Talovac to inform them about the *nouitati quas daret voyuoda Stipan*.[617] On the same day, envoys were appointed to be sent to Duke Stjepan, and in the following days, envoys were also sent to the Ottoman pasha.[618] In their letter to Talovac, the Ragusans stated that the Ottomans had ordered Stjepan to attack Ragusa. They inquired about his potential assistance to their town and requested that if he were to sign a peace agreement with Stjepan, they be included as well.[619] Considering the nature of this letter, it is certain that similar information was received by Tvrtko II and Radoslav. According to Orbini's writings, which are unsupported by other sources, Murad II offered Ragusa some Bosnian towns and territories near Ragusa in exchange for the despot's extradition.[620] In any case, serious pressures were at play, and the Ragusan authorities decided to present them to the Serbian ruler at the end of July,[621] even though his departure from Ragusa had been planned earlier.[622] Due to the increasingly difficult situation faced by the Ragusans due to their hospitality, Despot Đurađ, along with his entire entourage, left Ragusa and headed towards Hungary, where he arrived the following month.[623] In Ragusa, he obtained permission for further depositing valuable items and documents.[624] The departure of the despot eased the situation for the Ragusans and Duke Stjepan, who did not appear to be strongly motivated by the orders of the sultan. A decade after these events, Duke Stjepan emphasized

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[616] (20. 7. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 29v.

[617] (21. 7. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 32v.

[618] (21. 7. 1441) (22. 7. 1441) (26. 7. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 32v, 33v, 34v.

[619] (25. 7. 1441) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 435-436.

[620] Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 113-114.

[621] (20. 7. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 30.

[622] Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 457-460.

[623] (12. 7. 1441) (18. 7. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 23v, 24v, 26v, 27, 27v. (12. 7. 1441) (15. 7. 1441) Cons. Maius VI, 120v, 121. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 104. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 88. Rađep, "Utočište", 100.

[624] (19. 6. 1441) (31. 7. 1441) (24. 7. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 17, 18v, 19, 31, 31v, 34.

that during the despot's stay, he had incurred significant financial expenses. In February 1450, Stjepan informed the Ragusans that he had spent two thousand ducats on bribing Ottoman officials, while two years later, he explained that the sum amounted to thirty thousand ducats.[625]

Conflicts between Duke Stjepan and the Venetians over Despot Đurađ's possessions

Following the departure of Despot Đurađ from Ragusa, there was only a temporary calm in the coastal region. Condemned to wandering in foreign territories, the Serbian despot had minimal chances of reclaiming his land. Following the Ottoman conquest of Novo Brdo in July 1441, the last stronghold within the Despotate with which Đurađ had communicated disappeared. It was precisely at that time that Władysław was crowned Hungarian king in Székesfehérvár.[626] According to neighboring understandings, the Hungarian crown represented the most powerful lever of help on which the despot could rely on for a serious counterattack. Additionally, the Florentine agreement between Pope Eugene IV and Emperor John VIII in 1439, in which the Pope pledged to wage war against the Ottomans, worked in favor of the despot.[627] Following the departure of the despot, the Ragusans continued correspondence with all potential allies to fight the Ottomans, for their own interests. In early September 1441, a decision was made to send letters to the Aragonese king, Despot Đurađ, King Władysław, and Matko Talovac.[628] Examples of letters sent to Władysław and Talovac in mid-September have been preserved. Ragusans highlighted the importance of the despot, Talovac, and Władysław in the upcoming struggle against the Ottomans, which all Christian nations must support.[629]

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[625] (25. 2. 1450) Lett. di Lev. XV, 34. (23. 12. 1452) Ibid., 77v.

[626] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 97. Spremić, *Despot*, 288.

[627] Maksimović, "Srbi i Duga vojna", 47. Maja Nikolić, "Vizantija i Srbija u vreme firentinske unije crkava", *ZMSI* 96, Novi Sad 2017, 18.

[628] (11. 9. 1441) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 460.

[629] (17. 9. 1441) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 437-438.

By Đurađ's abandonment of the possessions in Zeta, and later Ragusa, from which he corresponded continuously with the local nobility, space was created for the influence of neighboring magnates to penetrate. Shortly after the despot's departure from Zeta, Duke Stjepan, most likely in September 1441, *occupare loca Albanie, quod supposita erant domino despoto Rascie*.[630] Venetian Senate's response at the end of October indicated that the Venetians had been actively engaged in the despot's possessions since this time. The Venetians had information that Kosača had gained the upper hand in Upper Zeta with the help of the Crnojević family, who had switched sides. They ordered the count of Shkodra to tour the places that had not yet recognized Stjepan's authority with his army and to try to motivate them not to do so. Diplomatic contact with the Bosnian duke was planned to clarify that the Republic had a signed peace agreement with the Serbian despot, which obligated them to protect his possessions in Zeta if necessary.[631] It was a peace agreement between the Republic of Venice and the Despotate, for which the Venetians had emphasized just a year earlier that it did not oblige them to any military actions. It seems that besides the Crnojević family, Kosača also had the support of the Metropolitan bishop from Budva.[632] It was precisely the Metropolitan bishop from Budva who addressed the Ragusans, however the Ragusan authorities delayed writing a response to him twice in early October.[633] In mid-October, new letters arrived from Bar to Ragusa, but their content is unknown.[634] While the Venetians were concerned about Stjepan's involvement in Zeta, the Bosnian duke sought permission to have his brigantines accepted in Ragusa or Drijeva, but the Ragusans rejected these requests.[635]

[630] The time of the Kosača's incursion into Upper Zeta can be determined by the content of Venetian letters. In a letter to Stjepan, the Venetians pointed out that they were informed about his actions by the Rector of Shkodra and Kotor. The same letter contained, as an appendix, a reply to the letter to the Rector of Kotor that was sent on October 6. Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 149-151. Compare: Ivan Božić, "Borba Stefana Vukčića i Mlečana za Zetu", in: *Istorija Crne Gore* II/2, 197.

[631] (28. 10. 1441) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 147-149. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 53. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 210.

[632] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 273.

[633] (6. 10. 1441) (7. 10. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 57, 57v.

[634] (14. 10. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 57v.

[635] (10. 11. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 65.

A few days later, the Venetians sent a letter to the count of Shkodra for Duke Stjepan, in which they emphasized that Drisht, Budva, Bar, and other despot's places had not caused any trouble to anyone, and they did not seek any form of protection from him that would force him to occupy them. They justified their involvement in the Zeta issues by a modified interpretation of the provisions of the agreement with the despot. The Venetians proposed to Stjepan to stop disturbing the occupied places, and if he refused, they demanded his promise not to attack the remaining despot's territories.[636] The specific reaction of the Bosnian duke to the Venetians' letter is not known. The further development of events is followed in fragments. In mid-December 1441, the rector of Kotor informed Duke Stjepan that Despot Đurađ had offered his possessions in Zeta to the Republic of Venice, and the authorities had issued orders to the governors of Kotor and Shkodra to become involved in the occupation of the mentioned places. Combinations were already being made to gain the support of the Crnojević family, upon which, apparently, the control over Upper Zeta depended.[637] Kosača's reaction is unknown.

During the middle of 1441, sources record Olivera's movements, the sister of Stefan Lazarević. In June 1441, the authorities in Ragusa granted her permission to be transported to Bar.[638] Early in October, she requested transportation once again to *subtum Antibarum*, but was unsuccessful.[639] It is unknown where she stayed since June 1441 when the Ragusans transported her to Bar. She was certainly in contact with her sister Jelena. In late October, Jelena ordered Ivaniš Mršić to deliver an amount of 30 ducats, which he had received from Luka Pautinović of Kotor as repayment of her principal, to Olivera.[640] Although the exact location of Olivera's whereabouts at that time is unknown, Jelena's instructions indicate that she was not stay-

[636] (2. 11. 1441) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 149-151. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 53-54. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 210.

[637] (19. 12. 1441) Iorga, *Notes* III, 79. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 55.

[638] (19. 6. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 17v.

[639] (6. 10. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 57.

[640] Đuro Tošić, "Sandaljeva udovica Jelena", *ZRVI* 41, Beograd 2004, 433.

ing at the Kosača court during that period. At the end of November, Duke Stjepan also got involved in Olivera's departure to Bar, and the requests made by him were fulfilled by the Ragusans.[641] The complete involvement of Olivera in the conflict between Duke Stjepan and Despot Đurađ in the summer of 1441 remains obscure. Her trips to Ragusa and Bar are certainly related to the despot's presence in these regions. However, at the same time, she enjoyed unconditional support from Stjepan and Jelena, even though the Kosača family was in conflict with the Branković family. A respectful relationship between Duke Stjepan and Olivera was also noted after Jelena's death when, during June and July 1443, Stjepan's envoys carried out the relocation of Jelena's inheritance from Ragusa on behalf of Olivera.[642]

In early 1442, Stjepan's position significantly improved from multiple angles. With the death of his long-time opponent Radoslav Pavlović, Kosača gained a broader maneuvering space for engagement in areas further away from his core possessions.[643] After extensive diplomatic correspondence, the Ragusans reached an agreement with Sultan Murad II in February 1442, which placed them on the Ottoman friends list, where Duke Stjepan was also listed.[644] At the beginning of the year, cordial relations were recorded between the Ragusans and the Kosača's court, and in February, the Ragusan authorities facilitated the transportation of Stjepan's envoys to Venice.[645] In early March, Kosača was preparing for military operations, as evidenced by the repair of weapons.[646] By no later than March 1442, Stjepan, together

[641] (24. 11. 1441) (25. 11. 1441) (29. 11. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 67, 67v, 69. Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 239.

[642] (28. 6. 1443) (6. 7. 1443) Cons. Rog. VIII, 223, 224v. Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 59. Esad Kurtović, "Doberko Marinić-poslanik bosanskog kralja Stjepana Tomaša", in: *Stoljeća Kraljeve Sutjeske*, Kraljeva Sutjeska-Sarajevo 2010, 102. (3. 7. 1443) Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 239-240.

[643] The Ragusans sent envoys to the Pavlovićs at the beginning of December to express their condolences. (5. 12. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 71. (11. 12. 1441) Cons. Minus IX, 41.

[644] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 232-234. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 366. The Ragusans forwarded this information to Bosnia in March. (22. 3. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 108v.

[645] (20. 1. 1441) (22. 1. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 86, 86v.

[646] (1. 3. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 89.

with Stefanica Crnojević, captured Bar, which until then had been under the control of Đurađ's supporters. These pieces of information were contained in the Ragusans' congratulations to Kosača for this achievement.[647] By taking Bar, the Bosnian duke also gained a portion of the Paštrovićs on his side, while the smaller local nobles who were oriented towards Venice abandoned this territory.[648] As indicated in later sources, Stjepan confirmed the privileges enjoyed by the local residents during Đurađ's rule when he occupied Bar.[649] For unknown reasons, the Ragusans also corresponded with the despot's Metropolitan during February.[650] This may refer to the despot's Metropolitan from Budva, who had addressed Ragusa several months earlier. Furthermore, it was during this period that the Ragusan authorities established contact with Stefanica Crnojević as well.[651]

Alongside Stjepan's involvement in Zeta, the Venetians, during the early days of spring, were preparing for a more active military campaign against Despot Đurađ's possessions in Zeta. The possibility of Kosača's attack on the territories within the sphere of interest of the Venetian Republic was presented by King Tvrtko II's envoys who had been staying in Venice during the spring months of 1442. They proposed joint action against Stjepan. The Senate did not agree to such a proposal but independently prepared for a demonstration of power.[652] In March, a decision was made to send letters to the captains of Kotor and Shkodra, instructing them to seize Bar, Budva, and Drisht, although they were aware of the dangerous nature of such a takeover. It was proposed again that Venetian captains engage in providing a pension for the Crnojević family, *qui sont capita montanee que est ad passus*. A decision was also made to appoint a separate provveditore who would lead Venetian operations in Zeta. To explain the occupation of these

[647] (24. 3. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 109v. Božić, "Borba Stefana Vukčića i Mlečana za Zetu", 199.

[648] Ivan Božić, "Srednjovekovni Paštrovići", *IČ* IX-X, Beograd 1959, 120-121.

[649] (19. 7. 1445) (6. 9. 1445) Valentini, *Acta Albaniae Veneta* III/XIX, 87, 126-127.

[650] (7. 2. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 92v.

[651] (9. 4. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 117.

[652] Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 212.

cities, the Senate proposed sending a monk from Shkodra to the Ottoman court. As of that point, the Venetians had fragmentary information about Stjepan's entry into Bar, from which the provveditore and captains were expected to request the surrender of the town to the Republic, as they claimed rights to it. The Venetian officers were to neutralize Stjepan's legitimacy of his positions in Zeta through his relationship with the Balšić family, presenting the facts that Balša had lost those territories in war.[653]

Despite initial optimism, events in Zeta in the spring of 1442 did not unfold according to Venetian plans. By June at the latest, Stjepan, with the help of Stefanica Crnojević, once again entered Lower Zeta with his army, but problems arose within the allies. Kosača attempted to equip himself for this endeavor in Ragusa, but he was not successful.[654] Engaging in warfare on a territory distant from his own possessions, Stjepan was too dependent on the fluctuating mood of the treacherous noble families of Zeta. The Kotor rector informed the Venetian Senate of the Bosnian duke's incursion in June through a letter, highlighting that the problem with Kosača lay precisely in the disunity among the Crnojević family, who remained divided. According to the Venetian response, it can be observed that Stjepan's envoys arrived in Venice no later than mid-June, proposing a peace agreement, which implies that events in Zeta were rapidly unfolding.[655] In early June, communication between the Rector of Kotor and Budva took place via Ragusa.[656] According to a later Venetian letter, Kosača ravaged the surroundings of Budva during his summer campaign,[657] but that was the end of his success regarding this town, which remained under the control of the despot's Metropolitan. Although it was clear that Stjepan's influence in Zeta

[653] (19. 3. 1442) (20. 3. 1442) Iorga, *Notes* III, 85-86. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 58-60. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 211-212.

[654] (26. 5. 1442) (7. 6. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 137, 141.

[655] (19. 6. 1442) Iorga, *Notes* III, 90-91. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 62. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 213-214. Stjepan's envoy Grupko received approval from the Ragusan authorities for transport to Venice in early June 1442. (2. 6. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 139.

[656] (6. 6. 1442) Cons. Minus IX, 93v.

[657] (1. 8. 1442) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 156.

was weakening, the Ragusan authorities voted at the end of June for free trade *ad voyuodam Stipanum in Zenta*.[658] After the occupation of Bar, the Bosnian duke had the opportunity to take possession of Drisht, which was still ruled by the nobles loyal to Despot Đurađ. However, the local count in Drisht remained undecided about how to proceed in the new political situation in Zeta.[659] It was precisely during Kosača's actions in Zeta that an envoy was sent via Ragusa from Drisht to Despot Đurađ in Hungary.[660] The Drisht authorities may have been waiting for instructions from the despot.

In parallel with the allies' advance into Lower Zeta, the Venetians worked on strengthening their influence in these areas. They provided instructions to the appointed provveditore Marco Zeno in June and July, instructing him to negotiate with the Crnojević family through whom the Venetian Republic could gain control of the despot's territories. Zeno had a free hand in negotiating with Stjepan,[661] although the negotiations did not take place. After receiving updated information from their authorities in Zeta regarding Stjepan's departure from those territories, the Venetian Senate formulated new instructions by the end of July. Kosača's departure provided the Venetians with an opportunity for more active engagement. Provveditore Zeno, as well as the Kotor rector and Shkodra count, were ordered to occupy Bar, Drisht, Budva, and all the passes leading from Upper Zeta.[662] Taking advantage of the absence of competition from the Zeta circle, Budva and Drisht voluntarily submitted to the Venetians in early August, with a wide range of privileges promised to them.[663] After gaining control over the mentioned territories, the Venetians focused on winning

[658] (25. 6. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 150v.

[659] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 61-62. Spremić, *Despot*, 267.

[660] (21. 6. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 145v.

[661] (11. 6. 1442) (15. 7. 1442) Iorga, *Notes* III, 89, 95. Gligor Stanojević, "Uslovi primanja mletačke vlasti grada Bara 1443. godine", *IČ* VI, Beograd 1956, 207. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 61-62. Božić, "Borba Stefana Vukčića i Mlečana za Zetu", 201. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 213-214.

[662] (27. 7. 1442) Iorga, *Notes* III, 96-97. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 364. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 63. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 215. Spremić, *Despot*, 312.

[663] (1. 8. 1442) (5. 8. 1442) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 156-157, 157-159.

over Stefanica Crnojević, who was still the key to possessing the former despot's possessions in Zeta. However, the Venetian efforts in September 1442 to win him over were not successful, just like their other attempts in the following months.[664] The Venetians' desire remained for the occupation of Bar, which was still under the nominal rule of Duke Stjepan. They did not lose hope of acquiring this place and repeatedly refused to grant permits to Kosača's envoys in October, who sought to negotiate peace. The Venetians were content with their previous success, which they sought to secure through envoys at the Ottomans.[665] The chronological sequence of conflicts between the Venetians and Duke Stjepan in Zeta, likely conveyed through Ragusan letters, probably reached Despot Đurađ, to whom they wrote during September and November 1442.[666]

Duke Stjepan did not easily reconcile with the development of the situation regarding the despot's territories in Zeta. Shkodra was attacked in October, in which his army was defeated.[667] According to a Venetian letter to the Count of Shkodra, Stjepan's forces were once again approaching Shkodra at the end of 1442.[668] It seems that Kosača, after several unsuccessful attempts to occupy Shkodra, was aware of his own weakness in the winter of 1442. He then turned to the Ragusan authorities, requesting their mediation for peace with the Venetian Republic, but they declined to act as mediators.[669] By early 1443, even the Venetians were becoming more inclined to reach peace with Duke Stjepan regarding the delineation of their influences on the former despot's territories in Zeta. The Venetian Senate instructed the Count of Shkodra to ensure peace, according to which Kosača would oblige himself to remove the small fortresses he had built after taking Bar, which were hindering Kotor's trade. If the Bosnian duke was not satisfied with the

[664] (17. 9. 1442) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 164–165.

[665] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 64. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 216.

[666] (27. 9. 1442) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 472. (13. 11. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 178v.

[667] (22. 10. 1442) Iorga, *Notes* III, 124. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 64-65.

[668] (8. 1. 1443) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 167.

[669] (5. 12. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 181v.

proposed terms, the count was to emphasize that the Venetian Republic was willing to leave Bar and its surroundings to him.[670] The Count of Shkodra evidently was not in a position to achieve reconciliation. In mid-January 1443, he decided to employ a tactic of winning over the Crnojevićs and reported to the authorities that their leader, Stefanica, had expressed interest in aligning with the Venetians.[671] However, the predictions of the Count of Shkodra did not prove accurate. In the background of these events, an ineffective diplomatic exchange was taking place between the Venetian Senate and Stjepan's envoys, who had been in Venice from March to May 1443.[672]

The isolation of Kosača's remaining possessions in Zeta represented a suitable ground for further Venetian ambitions. From the beginning of May 1443, the Venetian Senate issued instructions to Antonio Diedo, commander of the Adriatic fleet, for the occupation of Bar. However, following the established tradition of Venetian foreign policy, the option of negotiations with Kosača was also left open.[673] Along with these plans, the Venetians sought to secure their position with the Ottomans, whom Kosača had turned to as a last hope for survival in the occupied despot's territories.[674] Stjepan's position was deteriorating on multiple fronts. In Bosnia, he still found himself in an unfavorable situation due to conflicts with King Tvrtko II. The Ottomans, anticipating a Christian army, were concentrated far from Stjepan's possessions, while the Venetians were negotiating an alliance against him with the Talovac brothers as well.[675] As a result of the unfavorable external political climate, Stjepan lost Bar at the end of May 1443, thereby reducing his authority over the former Despotate to the fortresses of Medun, Soko, and the parts held by Stefanica Crnojević in Upper Zeta.[676] Towards the end of 1443,

[670] Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 168. Ćirković, *Herceg,* 65-66. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 217.

[671] (19. 1. 1443) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 168. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 67.

[672] (25. 5. 1443) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 174. Marko Šunjić, "Prilozi za istoriju bosansko-venecijanskih odnosa 1420–1463", *HZ* XIV, Zagreb 1961, 127. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 217-218.

[673] (7. 5. 1443) (31. 5. 1443) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 170, 175. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 67. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 220.

[674] (10. 5. 1443) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 170.

[675] (12. 7. 1443) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 176.

[676] Stanojević, "Uslovi primanja", 208. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 66. Spremić, *Despot*, 314.

Stjepan's positions in Zeta were further undermined by the transfer of Gojčin Crnojević and his clan to the Venetians' side. Gojčin was appointed as Duke of Upper Zeta, although it was a territory that was yet to be conquered from Kosača.[677] After years of conflict over the despot's possessions, the Venetians achieved their final victory over Duke Stjepan in the spring of 1444, due to his preoccupation with the conflict with the new Bosnian king, Stjepan Tomaš (1443-1461). The upheaval in Upper Zeta was carried out thanks to Stefanica Crnojević, who, with Stjepan's lack of interest in consolidating power over the despot's possessions, sided with the Venetians in March 1444.[678] With Kosača's decline, a new political and legal framework was established in Zeta, controlled by the Venetian Republic.

Bosnia towards the restoration of the Despotate

Following the establishment of Ottoman rule in the Despotate in the early 1440s, Ottoman influence in Bosnia continued to grow. The temporary disappearance of Đurađ's authority highlighted the importance of the Despotate as a buffer zone or filter which had absorbed part of Ottoman attacks from the east and south for decades. King Tvrtko II was under constant Ottoman pressure, especially due to the fact that the pretender Radivoj Ostojić had resurfaced in the state, as a traditional Ottoman ally. Ragusa's pleas to the Ottoman court in late 1440, regarding the unimpeded economic flow through Bosnia, serve as an indicator of the situation in Bosnia. According to these pleas, Sultan Murad II was expected to issue orders to his people in Bosnia and the Bosnian nobility to establish a similar situation as in the Despotate.[679] In the following years, Ottoman influence in Bosnia steadily increased. Tvrtko II sought solutions through Hungary and Venice. According to the records of King Władysław's biographer, Tvrtko II most likely sent envoys to the Hungarian court in 1440 with a proposal for

[677] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 365.

[678] Ćorović, *Historija*, 470.

[679] Živković, *Tvrtko* II, 203.

joint action against the Ottomans.[680] On the other hand, in early 1442, he presented a compelling offer to the Venetians, suggesting that the Doge and the Senate should take control of the Kingdom of Bosnia. When this offer did not leave a significant impact, the Bosnian king sought to exchange one of his towns for a Venetian town in Dalmatia. While the Venetians understood Tvrtko's position, they only provided moral support.[681]

During Đurađ's exile, Bosnia and the Despotate shared the same problematic foundation, with the exception that Bosnia's neighbor had undergone a difficult struggle for state restoration. After returning to Hungary, the despot was compelled to reconcile with King Władysław.[682] By the end of 1442, Đurađ was staying on the possession of Matko Talovac, from where he sought to motivate Hungarian barons for a major offensive against the Ottomans.[683] From the spring of 1442, Hungarian commander János Hunyadi achieved several victories against Ottoman forces, which influenced the persistence of the idea of a larger campaign against the Ottomans. It was precisely during this time that the Hungarian army, led by Hunyadi and Nicholas de Ilok, along with incursions into the Despotate and Wallachia, also launched an attack on the territory of Usora, causing material damage in that area.[684] The arrival of Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini in Hungary, sent by Pope Eugene IV in mid-1442, also worked in favor of the Serbian despot.[685] The interest in organizing a more serious military campaign began with the annunciation of the bull of Pope Eugene IV in January 1443, in which he called on the Christian world to fight against the Ottomans, fulfilling the promise made in Florence in 1439. A month later, after the Council of Buda, plans for expelling the

[680] Ćorović, *Historija*, 459-460. Perojević, "Stjepan Tvrtko II. Tvrtković (opet)", 500. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 271-272.

[681] Ćorović, *Historija*, 459-460. Perojević, "Stjepan Tvrtko II. Tvrtković (opet)", 500. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 193-194. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 205.

[682] Spremić, *Despot*, 261-262.

[683] (27. 9. 1442) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 472. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 125, 136. Maksimović, "Srbi i Duga vojna", 48-49.

[684] (17. 4. 1443) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 142. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 123.

[685] Perojević, "Stjepan Tvrtko II. Tvrtković (opet)", 499-501. Spremić, *Despot*, 318.

Ottomans were ready.[686] In March 1443, Despot Đurađ informed the Byzantine Emperor through Ragusa about the readiness to attack the Ottomans.[687] These events were directly related to earlier proposals by Tvrtko for joint action by Bosnian and Hungarian forces. The absence of the Bosnian king and nobility from the preparations for the "general Christian military campaign" once again revealed Hungary's chronic obsession with the Bosnian crown, implying a dual approach in Hungarian foreign policy towards Bosnia and the Despotate. Thus, during the most significant Christian endeavors against the Ottoman Empire, the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot found themselves on opposite sides of the imaginary line between "friends" and "enemies" of the Western world. While the allies were preparing for the campaign against the Ottomans, conflict arose in Bosnia in early 1443 between Tvrtko II and Duke Stjepan. Military actions continued in late 1443, with the exception that Tvrtko II was replaced by the new Bosnian king Stjepan Tomaš, who was accompanied by Duke Ivaniš Pavlović.[688] The political situation in the Bosnian state at the beginning of 1444, when the most powerful figures were divided into two opposing camps, further complicated Bosnian engagement in the war against the Ottomans. Immediately after coming to power, Tomaš continued an active policy towards the Roman Curia, firmly aligning himself with Catholicism and distancing himself from followers of the Bosnian Church.[689] The Bosnian king's actions must be viewed in the context of the political climate at the time and the desire to participate in the general campaign against the Ottomans.

United Hungarian and Serbian forces, supported by numerous military units from Europe, began their campaign during the summer of 1443, crossing the Danube and advancing through the Despotate during the autumn and winter. In November and December 1443, Hunyadi's and

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[686] Ćorović, *Historija*, 465. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 279, 314.

[687] Bariša Krekić, "Učešće Dubrovnika u ratovima protiv Turaka 1443 i 1444. g., *ZRVI* II, Beograd 1953, 147. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 285-286.

[688] Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 206. Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 32-39.

[689] Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 183-187. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 290.

Đurađ's troops clashed with Ottoman forces between Bovno and Niš and near Sofia.[690] According to a letter from Cardinal Cesarini to Frederick III of Habsburg (king/emperor 1440/1452–1493), it was around this time that Duke Petar Kovačević arrived from Bosnia with 600-700 cavalry and joined the Christian forces.[691] The arrival of Duke Petar on the battlefield in 1443 was interpreted in light of the quality of the relationship between Kovačević and Despot Đurađ, based on later events when they jointly acted in Srebrenica. Due to the proximity of his possessions to Srebrenica, which was under Ottoman control at the time, Duke Petar naturally leaned towards cooperation with the Christian coalition. The further involvement of the Bosnian duke in conflicts with the Ottomans is related to activities in Srebrenica in early 1444, and it is certain that Kovačević's troops did not participate in subsequent battles of the Christian coalition against the Ottomans.

After the capture of Sofia in early December 1443, there was a divergence of opinions within the allied army camp regarding the continuation or cessation of military activities. Hunyadi's opinion on continuing the operations prevailed. However, due to harsh winter conditions and the exhaustion of the army after the Battle of Zlatitsa, the Christian army withdrew towards Buda, where King Władysław, Hunyadi, and Despot Đurađ arrived in early 1444.[692] King Tomaš, upon assuming power, showed interest in the progress of the Christian army. Bosnian nobles closely observed events in the neighborhood. Although the Christian forces failed to achieve significant territorial advances, echoes of their military successes were felt in Bosnia, where King Tomaš and Bosnian nobility sought to establish closer ties with the Hungarian king

690 Krekić, "Učešće", 148. Spremić, *Despot*, 325.

691 "Postquam intravimus Rassiam, venerunt ad dominum despotum ex Rassianis ultro octo millia equestrium et pedestrium; venit eciam ad eundem ex Bossina quidam vayvoda vocatus dominus Petruc Cohacz cum equitibus VI^{c} vel VII^{c}." (3. 11. 1443) Iorga, *Notes* III, 109. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 178. Momčilo Spremić, "Duga vojna i obnova države", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 256. Pejo Ćošković, "O dolasku Stjepana Tomaša na vlast i njegovom međunarodnom priznanju", *IZ* V, 1984, 19. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 124. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 344.

692 Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 366-367. Spremić, "Duga vojna i obnova države", 256. Maksimović, "Srbi i Duga vojna", 57-71.

and the despot. Ragusan envoys at Duke Stjepan's court informed their authorities at the end of December that Kosača and other Bosnian nobles had sent their envoys to King Władysław and Despot Đurađ, but lacking detailed information, they instructed their envoys to report back on the return of these delegations.[693] Kosača's interest in the conflict between the coalition and the Ottomans was entirely logical considering that Sultan Murad II had been his main supporter in previous years. The success of these envoys remains a mystery. In mid-December, Despot's envoy Đurađ Golemović stayed at Kosača's territory, and Stjepan allowed him free passage.[694] A month later, two letters in the Slavic language from Bosnia arrived in Ragusa and were read. During further discussions, it was mentioned that the letters were from Ivaniš Pavlović to King Władysław and Despot Đurađ, and it was decided to deliver the letters to the mentioned addresses.[695] It is not known what the Bosnian duke wrote to Władysław and Đurađ. It was probably about a joint action by Pavlović and King Tomaš, who were eager to fight against the Ottomans. Ivaniš's envoy, Radoje, stayed in Ragusa until the end of the month when he received a response, while just a few days later, noblemen were chosen to compose a reply to the Bosnian king and Pavlović.[696] Throughout the following months, Tomaš continued to receive information through Ragusa about the situation in Hungary, where Despot Đurađ was still residing at that time.[697] Despite

[693] "Et perche sentemo per lo deto vayuoda et altri signori della Bossina esser mandata il lor ambassadori alla mayestade dello Re de Ungaria nostro signore et allo signore despoto" (2. 1. 1444) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 139.

[694] "Apresso ve comettemo et dissemo che se stagando voy dela apresso del deto voyuoda Stipan algun messo vegnera mandato per Giuragh Golemouich per impetrare algun saluocondutto del dicto voyuoda" (9. 12. 1443) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 137v.

[695] "de legendo literas sclauas missas de Bossina que dirriguntur serenissimo domino nostro regi Vladislauo et illustri domino dispoto Georgio" (7. 1. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 2v. "de mittendo quibus dirriguntur duas litteras sclauas voyuode Iuanis lectas in presenti consilio", Ibid., 3. Boris Nilević, "Posljednji Pavlovići-Bosna sredinom XV stoljeća", *HT* V, Sarajevo 2010, 23.

[696] "respondendi Radoe ambassiatori vayuode Iuanis Paulouich" (28. 1. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 12. "respondendi ambaxiatores serenissimi domino Regis Bose et ambaxiatori voyuode Iuanis Paulouich" (30. 1. 1444) Ibid., 14v.

[697] The Ragusans sent envoys to King Tomaš at the end of January, and they responded to the letter at the beginning of February 1444. (26. 1. 1444) (4. 2. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 11v. 15. In mid-March, the

sending letters and envoys to Władysław and the despot, Tomaš feared a potential attack from that side in February 1444. During their stay in Venice, the Bosnian envoys proposed to the Senate that, in the event of an attack by the Ottomans, the Hungarian king, or the despot, the Doge should take over the Bosnian Kingdom. These were certainly hypothetical considerations with elements of skillful diplomatic moves in front of the Senate, from whom assistance was sought due to the difficult conditions in which the Bosnian king found himself. The Venetians responded negatively to such demands, appointing Tomaš as one of their citizen.[698]

A division among the nobles persisted in Bosnia during the early months of 1444. King Tomaš and Duke Ivaniš marginalized Duke Stjepan, even depriving him of Drijeva, which prompted Kosača to establish relations with Alfonso I, the King of Naples (1442-1458).[699] The unfolding of the situation in Hungary also benefited Tomaš and Pavlović. In the early spring of 1444, a decision was made in Buda to continue the fight against the Ottomans. By destabilizing Ottoman positions in the neighboring regions, their power in Bosnia would simultaneously weaken. King Tomaš could directly strike at Kosača's main support in cooperation with the Hungarian court. As a result of the mediation of Duke János Hunyadi, King Tomaš was confirmed as Bosnian king by Władysław no later than May 1444.[700] Tomaš took advantage of this confirmation as soon as possible. In the second half of May, the king's envoy arrived in Ragusa with news that the fortress of Srebrenik, which had been under Ottoman control, had been

Ragusan Senate postponed the drafting of the reply to Tomaš until new information arrived from Hungary. (13. 3. 1444) Ibid., 29. A few days later, after the arrival of the letters from Hungary, the Ragusans made corrections to the letter for the Bosnian king. (18. 3. 1444) Ibid., 31v.

698 (28. 2. 1444) Iorga, *Notes* III, 154. Šunjić, "Prilozi", 126. Hrabak, "Venecija i bosanska država", 73. Emir O. Filipović, "Ardet ante oculos opulentissimum regnum…Venetian Reports about the Ottoman Conquest of the Bosnian Kingdom, A. D. 1463", in: *Italy and Europe's Eastern Border (1204-1669.)*, Peter Lang, 2012, 139.

699 Ćirković, *Herceg*, 75. Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 45, 49. Momčilo Spremić, "Balkanski vazali kralja Alfonsa Arogonskog", in: *Prekinut uspon. Srpske zemlje u poznom srednjem veku*, 358.

700 Thallóczy, *Studien*, 366-368. Ćorović, *Historija*, 471-472. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 277. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 285. Mrgić, "Poslednja dva Kotromanića", 197.

conquered. On this occasion, Srebrenica also came under the possession of the Bosnian crown.[701] Tomaš directed his involvement in the anti-Ottoman coalition towards seizing territories that Despot Đurađ certainly counted on, who at that moment was not in a position to do anything more about it. It is difficult to ascertain to what extent this attack was coordinated with the Hungarian court. Tomaš's communication with Władysław through Ragusa is quite certain. In early May, after receiving news from Hungary, the Ragusans made revisions to the letter for Tomaš.[702] Soon, Tomaš was informed of the news available to the Ragusans.[703] Despite negotiations with the Ottomans, Đurađ's positions were fragile in the spring of 1444.

During June 1444, the envoys of the despot and King Władysław were in Edirne, where an agreement with the Ottomans was reached regarding non-aggression. According to the terms of this agreement, Đurađ submitted to Sultan Murad II and accepted the payment of a large annual tribute, which allowed him to regain control within the borders from 1439. The agreement was ratified in Szeged the following month.[704] During these negotiations, the despot, assisted by envoys from his daughter Mara, the wife of Sultan Murad II, concluded a separate agreement with the Ottomans.[705] By the end of July 1444, the despot was still in Hungary, while he arrived in the Despotate in mid-August, resuming governance over his state after a five-year hiatus.[706] As a result of the establishment of peace and the revival of the Despotate, the Hungarians gained a sort of shield against the Ottomans, although the lofty goals of the Crusader idea remained unrealized.

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701 (22. 5. 1444) Consilium Maius VII, 178. Dinić, "Srebrenik", 357. Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 54, 56.

702 (2. 5. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 44.

703 (20. 5. 1444) (22. 5. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 51v, 52v.

704 Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 286-287.

705 On the way to the despot Đurađ in Hungary at the beginning of March 1444, a monk, Mara's envoy, stayed in Ragusa, from where he was transported to Split. (5. 3. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 26. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 201-210. Popović, *Mara Branković*, 114-115.

706 (27. 7. 1444) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 482. Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 294. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 369. Spremić, *Despot*, 344-346. Kalić, *Srbi u poznom srednjem veku*, 165.

King Tomaš, Duke Stjepan and Despot Đurađ: The era of "allies" and "opponents" (1444–1451)

Alongside the activities regarding the ratification of the peace agreement, King Władysław was corresponding with King Tomaš about plans for an attack on the Ottomans.[707] The following month, the Hungarian king issued a charter for actions against the Ottomans, which did not mention the Bosnian king or Despot Đurađ, who feared the outcome of the new campaign and the potential loss of the recently regained state.[708] Unlike the original composition of the anti-Ottoman coalition, and despite not being mentioned in Władysław's charter from August, Tomaš had already started warring against the Ottomans earlier. By the end of summer, his position against Duke Stjepan in Bosnia weakened. Shortly before their conflict in early August 1444, the Ragusans instructed their envoys not to accompany Tomaš beyond the borders of the Kosača's territory.[709] After the signing of the peace agreement in Szeged during August, the Ottomans invaded Bosnia, which influenced a change in the political environment. With the help of the Ottomans, Kosača managed to reclaim Drijeva.[710]

The Bosnian king's position was further complicated by the approaching alliance between Duke Stjepan and Despot Đurađ in the autumn of 1444. Their relationship was shaped by regional political dynamics, pointing to a common enemy, King Tomaš. The beginnings of their rapprochement were partially revealed through events that unfolded via Ragusa. In early September, a letter arrived in Ragusa delivered by their envoy Georgi Goze,

[707] (15. 8. 1444) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 156v. Marko Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 508.

[708] Mihailović, *Uspomene*, 27-28. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 211-213. Spremić, *Despot*, 342-344.

[709] (4. 8. 1444) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 155–155v.

[710] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 79. Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 61.

and on the same day, a decision was made to send it to Despot Đurađ.[711] It was Goze who was sent the following month to deliver verbal instructions to Stjepan and Đurađ.[712] By the end of October, the Ragusan authorities received information through their subjects in the Despotate about Duke Stjepan's potential visit to Despot Đurađ. They sought to exploit their meeting by having Ragusan envoys ask the Serbian despot to request the return of seized silver and the opening of trade routes for merchants from Duke Stjepan.[713] On the same day, a discussion was held regarding Stjepan's request for advice on his relationship with the despot.[714] In the autumn, Despot Đurađ purchased weapons from the Ragusans in preparation for possible war.[715] At the same time that these negotiations were taking place, a Christian campaign against the Ottomans was underway, culminating in the Battle of Varna in November 1444, during which the leader of the campaign, the Hungarian king Władysław, lost his life.[716] With the formation of a kind of alliance between Kosača and Branković, and the failure of the anti-Ottoman coalition, King Tomaš was the most dissatisfied. Shortly after improving his position, by the winter of 1444, he found himself isolated against the Ottomans and caught in the mutual ties between the despot and Stjepan. In Bosnia, the threat of the Ottomans persisted in October, and therefore the nobleman from the Nikolić lineage, Vukašin Grgurević, was granted permission to freely come to Ragusa with his family.[717]

Surrounded by opponents, Tomaš's political compass detected a potential ally in the direction of the Republic of Venice. Tomaš's envoy Pavle from

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[711] (10. 9. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 80v-81.

[712] (3. 10. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 84v.

[713] (26. 10. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 88v. It referred the problems faced by the Ragusan merchants in Sutjeska. (5. 9. 1444) (10. 9. 1444) Ibid., 80v, 81v.

[714] (26. 10. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 88v.

[715] (24. 9. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 83.

[716] Sfrances, *Hronika*, 119. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 370. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 228. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 287-288. Nevyan Mitev, "Notes on the campaign of Vladislav Varnenchik in northeastern Bulgaria in the autumn of 1444", *Banatica* 26/2, Cluj-Napoca 2015, 246-255.

[717] (3. 10. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 84v.

Jajce stayed in Venice during February and March of 1445, emphasizing that Stjepan and Đurađ had established cooperation and that Kosača had ceded parts of Upper Zeta, including the fortress of Medun, which he had held in his possession in recent years, to the despot. It is certain that Stjepan ceded Upper Zeta immediately after his approach to the despot in October 1444. Tomaš sent envoys to Venice to gain Venetian support, thereby achieving a balance against Stjepan and Đurađ. As a means of gaining the interest of the Venetians, the Bosnian king emphasized the danger of their cooperation for the Republic of Venice. However, Tomaš's proposals were not accepted in Venice. The Venetians had no antagonism towards the relationship between Kosača and Đurađ. They emphasized their good relations with the despot and expressed hope to live in peace with Stjepan as well. In case of need, Tomaš was allowed to come to one of their Dalmatian towns.[718] The statements of the Venetian Senate to the Bosnian king regarding their good relations with Despot Đurađ were merely a product of their own ambitions. Indeed, the Venetians sought to maintain good relations with the despot. For this purpose, they requested the Count of Shkodra not to disturb the despot's possessions in Upper Zeta.[719] Following their established diplomatic principles, the Senate pointed out that the former despot's territories were militarily conquered by Duke Stjepan, who was characterized as a common enemy of Venice and Despot Đurađ.[720] The Venetian ambition revolved around the delineation of possessions in Zeta, where they aimed to retain parts of the Despotate that they had conquered from Stjepan, whom the Venetians once again presented to the despot as their common ene-

[718] (4. 3. 1445) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 215-216. Ćorović, *Historija*, 473. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 511-512. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 88-89. Spremić, "Duga vojna i obnova državе", 260. Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 74-77. Hrabak, "Venecija i bosanska država", 76. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 239. Šunjić, "Prilozi", 130. Spremić, *Despot*, 358.

[719] (17. 1. 1445) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 213.

[720] (17. 1. 1445) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 214. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 247. Similar claims were repeated by the Venetian authorities two decades later to Despot Stefan Branković, when in Venice he sought support from the income of the former possessions of Despot Đurađ in Zeta. Spremić, "Despot Stefan Branković slepi", 136-137.

my.[721] In a subsequent letter to the despot, the Senate informed him about Kosača's cooperation with King Alfonso of Naples, whose fleet had arrived in Novi.[722] Such reports did not disrupt the good relations between Stjepan and Đurađ. The following day, the Venetians decided to add a request to their letter to the despot, urging his involvement in reconciling Venice with Kosača.[723] Specific indications of Đurađ's direct involvement are not preserved; however, two months later, a reconciliation was achieved between the Venetians and Duke Stjepan.[724]

The friendly relations between Stjepan and Đurađ during 1445 did not lead to joint military actions against their opponents. Despite both parties being politically aligned against a common enemy, King Tomaš, with whom they had military conflicts during the summer, there is no recorded joint endeavor. Taking advantage of the conflict between Stjepan and the Bosnian king, who focused on seeking allies, Đurađ most likely occupied Srebrenica during April 1445.[725] Shortly after the loss of Srebrenica, during the summer, King Tomaš, in collaboration with Duke Ivaniš, launched a military campaign against Kosača, resulting in an incursion as far as Trebinje.[726] The absence of mutual assistance between Stjepan and Đurađ during the military events in the spring and summer of 1445 indicates the limited scope of their agreement, which remained at the level of diplomatic courtesy and apparently did not include joint military engagement.

The end of 1445 was characterized by greater silence in the source materials than is usually the case during the winter months. At the beginning

[721] (14. 5. 1445) *Valentini Acta Albaniae Veneta*, III/XIX, 66-67. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 238.

[722] (10. 6. 1445) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 220. Šunjić, "Prilozi", 130. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 240. Momčilo Spremić, "Despot Đurađ Branković i kralj Alfons Aragonski", in: *Prekinut uspon. Srpske zemlje u poznom srednjem veku*, 375.

[723] (11. 6. 1445) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 221.

[724] (23. 8. 1445) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 226-229. Šunjić, "Prilozi", 130. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 90. Bogumil Hrabak, "Jadran u političkim i ekonomskim nastojanjima Sandalja Hranića i Stepana Vukčića Kosače", in: *Iz starije prošlosti Bosne i Hercegovine* III, 148.

[725] (14. 4. 1445) Cons. Rog. IX, 144.

[726] Ćorović, *Historija*, 475. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 512. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 280. Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 84.

of 1446, a strained relationship between the Bosnian and Serbian rulers became evident. According to the accounts of Bosnian nobleman, Duke Tvrtko Stančić, at this time, there was a direct prohibition by King Tomaš on allowing traffic to pass through the territory under the control of Despot Đurađ.[727] In the spring of 1446, King Tomaš still harbored a chronic fear of the Ottomans, which he sought to resolve through the Venetians.[728] During March and April, a border dispute erupted between the Republic of Ragusa and Duke Stjepan, in which envoys of Despot Đurađ, who were passing through, took part in its resolution as well.[729] In the background of the usual awakening of political relations, the final phase of a process was unfolding that would trigger new movements on the broader political stage in Bosnia and the neighboring regions. By mid-April, the Ragusans had information about the marriage of King Tomaš to Katarina, the daughter of Duke Stjepan.[730] It is quite certain that the campaign of the Bosnian king and Duke Ivaniš in the summer of 1445, as well as the weak defensive stance of the Ottomans, left an impact on Kosača's attitude towards the Kotromanićs, with whom he apparently reconciled during the winter months. Due to the involvement of the despot's envoys in the arbitration regarding the borders of Bosnia and Ragusa, it appears that the rapprochement of the most prominent political figures in Bosnia at that time was not public during March. With the marriage between King Tomaš and Katarina, the daughter of Duke Stjepan Vukčić, in May 1445, there was a natural disturbance

[727] "et al altro albergo ser Nicola de Goan. Allexandro de Goze, et Bosicho Baba et Giuan Sarzeuich et Gregur Grubazeuich et insieme con lor panni tutti et roba lor et stagando alquanti zorni metessemo tutti inseme de tutta karauana la Cholta per far presente a vayuoda Tuertcho Stanzich et al suo frar Gaspar. Et siando ly fato al presente lo pregassemo che ne dia la lazenzia de andar neli paexi del signor despoto. El qual vayuoda Tuertcho tropo et tropo tegnendosse de non volerne lassar per andar in li paexi del signor despoto, digando che signor Re de Bosna mesa chomandato che non debio lassar merchadanti ne lor merchade in la tegnuta del signor despotto. Et noy apropiandexe tropo con le preghar alla ultima ne dar la lazenzia per andare in Schiauonia" (5. 2. 1446) Div. Not. XXIX, 197.

[728] (17. 3. 1446) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 236. Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 97-98. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 242-243.

[729] (26. 3. 1446) (29. 3. 1446) (1. 4. 1446) (5. 4. 1446) (11. 4. 1446) Cons. Rog. IX, 229, 230v, 231, 234, 237.

[730] (19. 4. 1446) (21. 4. 1446) Cons. Rog. IX, 239bis, 239.

in the relationship between Kosača and Despot Đurađ.[731] The relationship between the two had been strained even a month before Tomaš's wedding, according to accounts from Ragusa.[732] Through Ragusa, Đurađ had precise information about events in Bosnia.[733] By reconciling and forming family ties with the bearer of the Bosnian crown, Stjepan relieved the pressure on his possessions, while Tomaš benefited through Kosača's connections with the Ottomans. At one point, the peaks of eastern and western politics intersected through Bosnia, facilitated by the good relations among the most prominent political figures. Rumors spread throughout Hungary at the end of 1446 regarding the possible crowning of Tomaš with the Hungarian crown, thus evoking Despot's long-standing fascination with this crown.[734] With the accelerated pace of political pattern changes, like figures on a chessboard, the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot found themselves on opposite sides of the prevailing powerful forces once again.

Despot Đurađ's policy in the following period firmly followed the Ottoman course. In the regional context, Đurađ was considered an influential figure at the Ottoman court. Through the mediation of the despot, the Ragusans attempted to regulate their unresolved status with Murad II.[735] The Ragusans' fears, about which they wrote to Pope Eugene IV in the middle of 1445, also included Ottoman orders to Bosnian nobles to threaten Ragusa and its subjects.[736] Immediately after the reconciliation in Bosnia, Tomaš gained favorable positions for renewed engagement regarding Srebrenica, which he man-

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[731] (31. 5. 1446) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 205-206. Ćorović, *Historija*, 476. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 92. Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 104-105.

[732] (11. 4. 1446) Cons. Rog. IX, 237.

[733] (4. 7. 1446) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 507. Simultaneously with the dispatch of envoys to Bosnia for the wedding of Tomaš and Katarina, the Ragusans were deliberating their response to Despot Đurađ. "respodendi Iuano ambaxiatori domini despotis prout sibi melius placiunt" (21. 4. 1446) Cons. Rog. IX, 239 bisv. (21. 4. 1446) Ibid., 239v.

[734] Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 101. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 289.

[735] (7. 3. 1446) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 203–203v. (2. 5. 1446) (3. 5. 1446) (4. 5. 1446) Cons. Rog. IX, 249, 250, 250v-251, 252.

[736] (27. 6. 1445) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 175v.

aged to recapture from the Serbian despot in the middle of the year.[737] Apart from the establishment of authority over Srebrenica, the alliance did not significantly affect other aspects that could jeopardize the despot's position. However, it seems that Tomaš and Stjepan were planning undisclosed military undertakings in the months following the reconciliation, as evidenced by frequent inquiries about purchasing weapons.[738] By the end of the year, Đurađ sought to strengthen his international position through marital ties involving his son Lazar. Preparations for the arrival of Lazar's fiancee Helena, daughter of Morea's despot Thomas Palaiologos, were underway in Ragusa from September 1446, and she set off for Smederevo in early November.[739] Duke Stjepan, who organized Helena's escort through his territory, acted in a courteous manner regarding this ceremony as well.[740]

Events from the period of Lazar's marriage, when Kosača offered to accompany the future daughter-in-law of the Branković house, authentically illustrate the complex constellation of allies and opponents in the triangle formed by the Bosnian king, the Serbian despot, and Duke Stjepan. It is quite certain that alliances and rivalries between the Bosnian king and the nobility, as well as the despot Đurađ, during this time represented a shifting of power from one side to another, with the absence of political and military moves that would make a significant breakthrough compared to the usual medieval routine of relatively straightforward diplomatic approaches. An important characteristic of the relationship between Bosnia and the Despotate at that time is reflected in the absence of Hungarian influence, through which the broader political patterns in which these two neighboring states operated had been shaped in previous decades. The absence of Hungarian political influence in Bosnian-Serbian relations during this period is depicted during

[737] Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 39.

[738] (11. 4. 1446) Cons. Rog. IX, 237. (22. 9. 1446) (26. 9. 1446) Cons. Rog. X, 30, 31.

[739] Tadić, *Promet putnika*, 89-93. Ferjančić, "Vizantinci u Srbiji", 205-206. Đurić, *Sumrak Vizantije*, 345.

[740] In a letter to Duke Stjepan Vukčić: "chome la soa magnificentia dixe che essendo fato per li soy homeni et alguni delli nostri delli furti et danni delle chose della nouiza del conte Lazaro et delli soy zentilhomeni chel la aconpagneua nel passare che faze per lo suo teritorio" (8. 3. 1447) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 231 bis.

the election of Ladislaus the Posthumous (1444-1457) as the new Hungarian king, when a letter from Enea Silvio Piccolomini from October 1445 emphasized the uncertainty of whether the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot would recognize any Hungarian king, given that they barely acknowledged Sigismund and Louis I.[741] In the era of Hungarian retreat and changes in the regional political matrix with the main role played by the Ottoman sultan, the Balkan "allies and opponents" sought to improve their relations at the Ottoman court. The extensive Ragusan mission in Edirne, which was supposed to secure unhindered business in Bosnia and the Despotate, with the help of Despot Đurađ and his envoys, was finally successfully concluded in August 1447.[742] Ragusan diplomacy provides an excellent example of the political context at that time, as the local authorities were still willing to participate at the Hungarian court with two thousand ducats for an attack on the Ottomans just a few months before the agreement was reached.[743]

In the context of the general political orientation towards the Ottomans, Duke Stjepan also took new steps, but his influence at the Porte was weakening due to his rapprochement with the Bosnian king. In March 1447, Stjepan was successful in obtaining military supplies in Ragusa after several unsuccessful attempts.[744] Shortly after purchasing weapons and military armor, the Bosnian duke clashed with the Ragusans over unresolved issues regarding the transport of goods through his territory. As a result, the Ragusans sought assistance from Ottoman officials and Despot Đurađ.[745] Although sources only partially follow Kosača's actions, according to later Ragusan accounts, the duke was planning an attack on Ragusa. For this campaign, Stjepan needed permission from Sultan Murad II, but his proposal to conquer Ragusa was not well-received at the Porte, even when presented as highly profitable for the Ottomans. Having failed at the Porte, Stjepan sent envoys to Despot

[741] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 289.

[742] Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 107.

[743] (27. 3. 1447) Cons. Rog. X, 86.

[744] (7. 3. 1447) (15. 3. 1447) Cons. Rog. X, 80, 83v.

[745] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 98. Spremić, *Despot*, 382.

Đurađ in an attempt to establish a better relationship. Stjepan's engagement with Đurađ was a direct consequence of his failure with the sultan, and his further ambitions had the same goal with the mediation of the despot, who was known to have a good standing with the Ottomans. The Bosnian duke's efforts were thwarted by the Ragusans in Smederevo. The Ragusans ordered the disruption of Stjepan's envoys at the despot's court by influencing his wife and sons. According to the instructions, Pasqual Sorgo and Damian Georgio were supposed to invoke Kosača's well-known treachery and switching sides, presenting a recent case when he abandoned cooperation with Đurađ and entered into an alliance with King Tomaš, who was the despot's enemy. The Ragusans interpreted Kosača's commitment to form an alliance with Đurađ as the duke's desire to prevent his subjects from fleeing to the neighboring territory of the Despotate. The Ragusans suggested to the despot to accept the defectors from Stjepan, which would cause the Bosnian noble to lose his subjects.[746] The outcome of this attempt by Stjepan is unknown, but it appears that the Bosnian duke did not achieve significant results in terms of cooperation with the despot at the end of 1447. In this matter, Ragusa's involvement followed the line of pursuing their own interests by weakening Stjepan's power in order to enjoy a more comfortable life in the border region. On the other hand, it is necessary to consider the fact of how attractive the Ragusan plan of accepting Bosnian defectors was to Despot Đurađ, as it would complicate his relations with Stjepan. However, by the end of the year, Stjepan had developed more cordial relations with the Ragusans when they presented him with gifts during his stay in Blagaj.[747]

At the beginning of 1448, changes in expansionist models orchestrated by neighboring powers resulted in a reorganization of political directions and factions among Balkan rulers and nobility. The Ottomans were the first to act, launching an attack on territories under Bosnian rule in early 1448. Since the Ragusans had information about the preparations for the attack during February and were working to secure their own territory, it is

[746] (18. 10. 1447) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 244v-245. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 99-10. Spremić, *Despot*, 377, 382.

[747] (2. 12. 1447) Cons. Rog. X, 141v.

reasonable to conclude that this was an anticipated and planned attack.[748] Ottoman forces penetrated Stjepan's territory in March and devastated Drijeva, while another part of the army continued westward. According to the information available to the Rector of Korčula, Petar Soranzo, the Ottoman incursion into Bosnia was directed by Despot Đurađ, who provided his guides for this campaign. The rector justified the action of the Serbian despot by citing the failed marriage between the Branković and Kosača families.[749] Despite the fact that this marriage is not recorded in other sources, it does not necessarily mean that certain contacts were not established during this period. The potential involvement of the despot's subjects in this Ottoman attack could be seen as an integral part of vassal obligations towards the suzerain. Although King Tomaš and Stjepan were part of the same faction at this time, it appears that this Ottoman incursion did not extend further north into the King's land, possibly due to the relatively peaceful conditions recorded in the hinterlands of Ragusa during April and May.[750] According to Soranzo's report, there was a lack of unity during the Ottoman invasion of Bosnia, which further hindered resistance.[751] It is certain that the relationship between Tomaš and Stjepan had been gradually deteriorating since the end of 1447 when Kosača sent an envoy to the Despotate. However, it is difficult to establish whether the rector's mention of disunity referred specifically to the two of them. In the following months, it became evident that their alliance was not built on solid foundations.

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[748] (10. 2. 1448) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 249v-250, 253v-254. (23. 2. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 161v. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 103-104. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 356.

[749] "i qual scrive come una grandissima quantitade di Turchi sono intradi in la Bossina, e parme per quello se siuulga, che i uoia uegnir ai danni del conte Stephano, non so se abbia altra intention; e per quello io sento par i sia mossi a petition del despoto Zorzi, perche per quello sento nouvamente i detti son uegnudi a grad diuision, in modo che la fiola, la qual prese questo san Martin el conte Stefano dal despoto Zorzi, quella i ha manda in dietro." (12. 3. 1448) Frane Radić, "Prilog za povjest slavenskoga juga god. 1448.", *Starine* JAZU XXVII, Zagreb 1895, 227-228. Mihailo Dinić, "Trg Drijeva i okolina u srednjem veku", *GNČ* XLVII, Beograd 1938, 136. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 103-104. Tošić, *Trg Drijeva*, 150. Spremić, *Despot*, 384. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 356.

[750] (26. 4. 1448) (24. 5. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 184v, 195.

[751] Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 244.

The expansion of Ottoman influence in the Balkan states once again provoked a Hungarian reaction. During the summer of 1448, the governor of the Kingdom of Hungary, János Hunyadi, made final preparations for an independent campaign against the Ottomans. Alongside these events, we observe synchronized actions by King Tomaš and Duke Stjepan aimed at reconciling with Despot Đurađ, who was expected to serve as leverage for the Bosnian nobles to improve their position at the Ottoman court. It is quite certain that in Bosnia they did not harbor great hopes for the success of Hunyadi's campaign. In May, King Tomaš sent envoys to the despot, which did not yield significant results in bringing the neighboring rulers closer together. For the failure of his diplomacy, the Bosnian king, in early June, accused the subjects and prominent officials of the Ragusan authorities at the despot's court, Pasqual Sorgo and Damian Georgio, who had been tasked a year earlier with preventing the rapprochement between Stjepan and Đurađ.[752] In a letter to the mentioned Ragusans, the authorities conveyed that Tomaš emphasized that they had hindered the efforts of his envoys on two occasions.[753] The Ragusans quickly reacted, and the following month, they received a response from their fellow citizens who defended themselves with their position in the despot's service, stating that they had to advocate for the interests of the Despotate. All that the Ragusan authorities could do for the Bosnian king amounted to reproaching their subjects.[754] By the end of June 1448, Stjepan

[752] "de induciando super querelam quam dominus rex Thomas Bosine facit per suas litteras supra ser Pasqualem de Sorgo et ser Damianum de Georgio nobiles nostros". (3. 6. 1448) Cons. Rog X, 199v. (14. 6. 1448) (17. 6. 1448) Ibid., 202v, 203.

[753] "In questi zorni passati la maiestadi del Re Thomas de Bossina ne a scrito per sue lettere lamentadose grandemente di vuy et digando che per due volte per suggestione operation vostra non e seguito lo acordio tra luy e lo detto signor despoto, la qualcosa non credemo puncto anzi credemo tuto questo esser processo da maliouoli inimici vostri lo natural deli quali e sempre de seminar discordia doue puono" (27. 5. 1448) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 261vbis.

[754] "Et maxime quella concluxione de parlare che fate digando che essendo voy una volta seruitori del lo prefato signor despoto con mancho non procesi zetto che obedire la soa signoria in tute chose che ut comandasse alla qual una lettera respondendo ve dissemo che despon ideo auessima persona de questo mondo non suti piu tegnuti che alla patria vostra alla qual per debito de natura prima fosi obligati auanti che per ventura ad algun signore andasi a seruire degna iusta et rationalle chosa sie chelli comandamenti della nostra signoria li quali se extendeno all utilitade et bon stato della patria

addressed the Ragusan officials, demanding a copy of his previous agreement with the despot. It seems that Kosača had already reached an agreement with Đurađ, and he needed the previous charter as a template for drafting a new agreement. The Ragusan authorities refused to provide a copy of the agreement, likely in an attempt to impede reconciliation.[755]

During 1448, the influence of Alfonso, King of Naples over the Balkan states was expanding. In previous years, during the unstable political situation in Hungary, Alfonso had entertained ideas of being crowned with the Hungarian crown. While on the other hand, the Neapolitan king had a conflict with the Venetians. Given these political circumstances, contacts with Balkan rulers were of great importance due to the territorial extent of their possessions and states. After Duke Stjepan established friendly relations with the Neapolitan court in 1444, Despot Đurađ exchanged diplomatic missions with King Alfonso at the end of 1447.[756] In early 1448, the despot and Alfonso deepened their collaboration due to Đurađ's conflict with the Venetians in Zeta, during which the Neapolitan envoy also visited Kosača's court.[757] In June, Alfonso's envoys followed a similar route, which indicates that his diplomats likely played a significant role in influencing the reconciliation between Stjepan and Đurađ.[758] At the beginning of May 1448, King Tomaš also tried to establish stronger ties with the Neapolitan court.[759] Aligning with Alfonso carried an anti-Ottoman orientation for the Balkan political forces, thus forming a complex system of political currents. Even though Alfonso developed a close relationship with Governor Hunyadi in 1447 and actively advocated for an attack on the Ottoman Empire,

vostra siano presiarti et anteposti ad ogni voluntade et comandamento del deto signori despoto per tanto sapendo non che per la Dio gratia sati detati de tale prudentia et discretione et che siti chossi boni zelatori d'ogni bono stato della patria vostra" (27. 7. 1448) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 264v.

[755] (26. 6. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 206.

[756] Spremić. "Despot Đurađ Branković i kralj Alfons Aragonski", 375. Spremić, *Despot*, 381.

[757] Radić, "Prilog", 226-227. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 104.

[758] Radić, "Prilog", 235. Ćirković *Herceg*, 104. Spremić. "Despot Đurađ Branković i kralj Alfons Aragonski", 377.

[759] (8. 5. 1448) Thallóczy, *Studien*, 380-381. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 516.

for which he sought to motivate the Serbian despot during the summer of 1448,[760] his influence on Balkan politics was primarily a diplomatic one.

According to the established principle, the shifting of power in the relationship between the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot regularly brought military conflicts around Srebrenica. During the alliance between Tomaš and Stjepan, the despot had little chance of gaining control over the important mining center. Duke Stjepan's strength was a determining factor in the power dynamics between Bosnia and the Despotate in the 1440s. By establishing a new alliance with the despot, influenced by foreign political circumstances, Kosača once again became a factor of change on the borders between Bosnia and the Despotate. According to Serbian chronicles, the Bosnian army in Srebrenica was defeated in September 1448 by Thomas Kantakuzenos, Irene's brother.[761] Apparently, at the time of this attack, the despot also assumed control over the Višegrad region. In late February 1449, the Ragusan authorities selected nobles to compose a letter to their fellow citizens in the despot's service and to the town count and Ragusan citizens in Višegrad.[762] A preserved copy of the letter from mid-March indicates that privileges granted by Despot Đurađ to the Ragusans were being introduced in Višegrad at that time. Due to the change of authority in Višegrad, the Ragusans encountered some issues with transit customs.[763]

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[760] Spremić, *Despot*, 381.

[761] (16. 9. 1448) Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 235-236. According to another chronicle under this year, it is recorded that the Serbs achieved victory over the Bosnian king. Ilarion Ruvarac, "O prienosu tiela sv. Luke u Smederevo", *Rad* JAZU V, Zagreb 1868, 179.

[762] "de faciendo tres qui forment literam scribendam ceonich domini despot et unam aliam scribendam comiti, et mercatoribus de Viscegrad" (27. 2. 1449) Cons. Rog. XI, 45v. On the same day, in the Minor Council, three nobles were chosen to compose the aforementioned letters. (27. 2. 1449) Cons. Minus XII, 57v. "de firmando literam scriptam ceonich domini despoti lectam in presenti consilio" (11. 3. 1449) Cons. Rog. XI, 53. "de firmando responsionem factam illis de Visegrat lectam in presenti consilio." Ibid. Višegrad is also mentioned in documents in the following years, however, without a precise indication of which ruler this place belonged to. (22. 7. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 107v. (26. 6. 1454) Cons. Minus XIII, 210v. About Višegrad, see: Elmedina Duranović, "Iz historije Višegrada u srednjem vijeku", *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta u Sarajevu* V, Sarajevo 2018, 136-162.

[763] "perche abiamo rezevuta lettera dello conte et merchadanti de Visegrad per la qual se agrauano che hauendo optegnudo dallo signor despoto la lor intentione sopra zerte gabelle passatiue. E questa

Despite contacts and promises between the despot and King Alfonso, Đurađ did not militarily engage in Hunyadi's campaign at the end of the summer of 1448. The price he could have paid in case of Hungarian failure was too high, so the despot continued to adhere to the agreement with Sultan Murad from 1444. In mid-October 1448, the Hungarian army was defeated by the Ottomans in Kosovo.[764] According to available sources, Bosnian magnates did not participate in the Hungarian campaign. Concurrently with these events, the despot's duke Altoman was waging war against the Venetians in Zeta with varying degrees of success, further draining the resources of Đurađ's state.[765] After the Hungarian defeat in Kosovo, Đurađ demonstrated the political orientation of the Despotate by capturing Hunyadi, who was on his territory, during the Hungarian-Ottoman conflict.[766]

Taking advantage of a favorable political climate during the alliance with the Serbian despot and the Neapolitan king, as well as a period of peaceful relations with the Ottomans, Stjepan declared himself a herzog in the autumn of 1448. He sought to elevate his status to the rank that Herzog Hrvoje Vukčić had held in Bosnia at the beginning of the 15th century.[767] The self-proclaimed herzog capitalized on the current stability of his position at the Ottoman court. In late January 1449, the Ragusans complained to Despot Đurađ that they had information suggesting that Kosača was trying to discredit them in front of Sultan Murad II. They pleaded with the despot to utilize his influence at the Porte and prevent any potential damage that Kosača could inflict upon them diplomatically. The Ragusan authorities sought to take advantage of the good relations between the herzog and the despot, requesting his intervention with Stjepan on behalf of their merchants. Once again, the Ragusan nobles in the service of the despot were meant to further

chosa essendo a voy comessa voy lauete desconzata per tanto ben che respetando voy esser homo prudente et discreto et ben amatore d'ogni bon stato della patria vostra a noy sia forte di creder che questa chosa sia" (12. 3. 1449) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 10.

[764] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 254. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 517.

[765] Spremić, *Despot*, 387-391.

[766] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 259. Spremić, *Despot*, 399-405. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 291.

[767] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 106.

motivate him to align himself with the Ragusans.[768] A few months later, in a letter to his fellow citizen and despot's *čelnik* Damian Georgio, the Ragusans once again implored the despot to continue defending Ragusa against its neighbors' intrigues.[769] The relationship between the herzog and King Tomaš deteriorated in early 1449 when, according to reports at the time, Ottoman troops arrived in Bosnia at his invitation. This was a short-lived episode in which the Ottomans focused on the king's possessions. By the end of March, reports arrived in Venice from Korčula indicating the Ottoman army's withdrawal from Bosnia.[770] The hostilities between Tomaš and Stjepan, however, continued in the months that followed.[771]

The Balkan states were unable to effectively resist the continuous Ottoman incursions, as the Ottomans exploited conflicts and divisions among rulers and nobility to deepen their influence in these regions. Following the defeat in Kosovo in October 1448, the Hungarians also lacked the resources to launch new military campaigns against the Ottomans. For Hunyadi himself, it was crucial to establish peace with Murad II, given the evident lack of military resources for a significant undertaking in the near future. In such political circumstances, the Hungarians followed the Ragusan recipe and sought to arrange relations with the Ottoman court through Despot Đurađ. As early as the beginning of 1449, the Ragusans presented news to the despot from the Buda court in a letter to Sorgo and Georgio.[772] In mid-March 1449, Governor Hunyadi sent a letter to King Tomaš through Ragusa.[773] Most likely,

[768] "Apresso perche altre fate semo aduisati da persona fidedegne lo amigo che sapete nello mandare delli ambasador soy alla Porta piu fate auer zerchato dalla Porta delle chose contra lo honor et stato nostro … [7v] … Et a voy dissemo che sempre vogliati stare attenti quando lo deto signore despoto vegnesse a mandare algun suo ambassador alla Porta ouer a scriuere a quelli ouero che simelmente algun suo ambassadore vegnesse a mandare allo dato amigo ouer che dello amigo vegnesse al luy signore dispoto sempre atendere sollicitare apresso desso signore despoto [8]" (28. 1. 1449) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 7v-8.

[769] (12. 3. 1449) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 10.

[770] Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 245.

[771] (7. 4. 1449) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 300-301. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 120.

[772] (28. 1. 1449) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 7v-8.

[773] (19. 3. 1449) Cons. Rog. XI, 54v.

this was correspondence regarding the conclusion of peace with the Ottomans, in which the Bosnian king was particularly interested. Despot Đurađ, as a mediator in the peace negotiations, drafted a proposal for an agreement at the end of May 1449, which was sent to the Hungarian assembly. According to the draft treaty, the peace was supposed to last for seven years. The Despotate would pay only half of the tribute to the sultan, while Bosnia would continue to pay the full amount, and the previous debts of the Bosnian crown to Murad II would be written off. If the sultan did not agree to forgive the Bosnian debt, Tomaš was to negotiate separately with the Porte. According to this agreement, both Bosnia and the Despotate would benefit from securing peace with the Ottomans. If the conflicting parties did not agree on this draft, the despot proposed using the previous truce, concluded during King Sigismund's reign, as a basis, under which both Bosnia and the Despotate would pay the full tribute amount.[774] Đurađ's draft implied distancing the Balkan states from the influence of Hungary and the Ottomans, which would not be favorable to either side. The proposed agreement, besides an undefined peace with the Ottomans, did not represent a particularly significant step for the Bosnian king. On this occasion, the despot did not pay too much attention to how much it would relieve Bosnian-Ottoman relations, considering his open hostility towards Tomaš.

In early June, the proposed draft agreement was not approved by the Hungarian assembly in the presence of the Bosnian king and the despot. During this gathering, attention was also drawn to the conflict between

[774] "item vt ex Regno Rascie similiter vsque tempus treugarum, eciam tantummodo medietas census soliti soluatur, ac medietas armigerorum solitorum, vsque tempus idem, ex eodem Regno, ipsi Imperatori pro subsidio dari teneatur, item vt Regnum Bozne censum solitum, integre ipsi Imperatori turcorum soluere teneatur, item vt idem Imperator totale debitum, quo, sibi, Rex Bozne obligatur, ipsi Regi relaxet, et eum proinde quitum committat, si autem ipse Imperator, dictum debitum relaxare noluerit, extunc disposicio vlterior, in facto ipsius debiti, ad ipsum Regem Bozne relinquatur, item vt partibus Transalpinis, Regno Rascie, et Regno Bozne, ac eorum principibus et eorum Incolis omnimoda pax et trnquillitas" (21. 5. 1449) Teleki, Hunyadiak X, 243-244. Momčilo Spremić, "Turski tributari u 14. i 15. veku", *IG* 1-2 (1970), Beograd 1970, 37. Sima Ćirković, "Despot Đurađ Branković i ugarsko-turski pregovori 1454. godine", *Glas* SANU 280/15, Beograd 1971, 104. Dedić, "Relations Between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate", 61-62.

Tomaš and Đurađ, which revolved largely around the issue of Srebrenica. The successive wars for this mining center further depleted the resources of Bosnia and the Despotate, making it easier for Ottoman influence to establish itself in these regions. Due to the close relationship that Tomaš had built with the Roman Curia in recent years, the papal emissaries emphasized that the Bosnian king had suffered numerous damages due to his affiliation with Catholicism. Hungarian barons sought to mediate in reconciling Tomaš and Đurađ, highlighting that their mutual conflicts would be resolved in a court where decisions would be made based on proposed evidence.[775]

After the failure to achieve a truce under the despot's initiative, the Hungarians developed a new plan for an agreement that they presented to Đurađ. According to the Hungarian plans, the Serbian despot was supposed to act as a mediator. Nevertheless, at the end of 1449, Đurađ justified his lack of interest by stating that he feared the Ottomans.[776] Relations between Hungary and the Despotate cooled down once again, as the Serbian despot continued to maintain ties with the Ottomans, and the course of his foreign policy could not deviate from Ottoman demands. Any distancing or divergence could result in the Despotate returning to the state of affairs from 1439. On the other hand, King Tomaš was unable to establish a quality relationship with the Ottomans like the despot. Ottoman presence in every sense meant the weakening of the Bosnian state, and these were diametrically opposed constants that, despite Tomaš's previous efforts, could not coexist. Tomaš's orientation towards the West was aimed at maintaining good relations with the Curia, Venice, and Hungary. In November 1449, at the same time that Đurađ refused to mediate between the Hungarians and the Ottomans, the Bosnian king reached an agreement with the Hungarians

[775] "Postremo in facto D. regis Bosnae differentiam illam, quae inter ipsum et despotum Rasciae viget, per viam iudicii sedare deliberauimus, assistemusque tandem parti, qua plus iuris habitura est, prout super his oratoribus ipsarum partium, qui apud nos in hac congregatione fuerant, a certa auisamenta dari fecimus." Stephano Katona, *Historia critica regvm Hungariae stiepis mixtae ex fide domesticorum et exterorum scriptorum concinnata*, VI/XIII, Pestini 1790, 633-634. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 262. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 317.

[776] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 263.

regarding defense against the Ottomans. As a result of this agreement, the Bosnian side was required to cooperate with the Hungarians in the event of Ottoman attacks, demonstrating the political situation at the time when the Ottomans held the upper hand.[777] Recent Bosnian-Hungarian plans for a joint campaign to expel the Ottomans were transformed into a joint defense plan that, due to circumstances, was never put into action.

The strained relations between Tomaš and Đurađ in the late 1440s repeatedly led to military confrontations. The most frequent points of contention revolved around the frequent changes in ownership of Srebrenica, which Tomaš re-annexed to the Bosnian crown in early 1449.[778] Besides cooperating with the Hungarians on joint action against Ottoman attacks, Tomaš continued to maintain good relations with the Venetians, which did not bring him visible benefits. During the conflict between Venice and King Alfonso of Naples in mid-1449, the Bosnian king found himself on the Venetian side. Although this war did not last long nor did it have significant consequences during its duration, the rulers of Bosnia and the Despotate once again found themselves on opposing sides. Meanwhile, Tomaš unsuccessfully appealed to the Venetian Senate for assistance against Kosača, whom he identified as their common enemy, but the Venetians were not willing to engage more actively.[779] When the Venetian-Neapolitan conflict ended in October 1450, Tomaš and Đurađ were among the signatories of the peace treaty between the opposing sides.[780] The fact that the despot and Herzog Stjepan formally stood on Alfonso's side did not significantly change the Venetians' stance toward the two allies. Their envoys were simultaneously present in Venice with similar demands in April 1450. Đurađ sought to resolve the crisis in Zeta, demanding the return of his former

[777] (11. 11. 1449) Teleki, *Hunyadiak* X, 245. Aleksandar Krstić, "Povelja kralja Stefana Tomaša kojom se obavezuje na vernost ugarskoj protiv Turaka", *GPB* 8, Banja Luka 2015, 96-97. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 318. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 358.

[778] (1. 3. 1449) Cons. Rog. XI, 46v.

[779] Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 245-246.

[780] (13. 10. 1450) (24. 10. 1450) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 356. Iorga, *Notes* III, 258. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 246.

possessions, to which the Venetians reiterated their earlier response that they had occupied those territories in the war against Kosača. Although Stjepan also advocated for Despot Đurađ in his letter, alongside the usual wishes for friendly relations in the future, the Venetian authorities did not even consider returning the disputed possessions.[781]

During this time, King Tomaš attempted to resolve the long-standing conflict with Despot Đurađ. Significant efforts regarding this matter were recorded in the spring of 1450. The Pope once again expressed interest in reconciling Tomaš and Đurađ, recognizing the danger their conflict posed to strengthening Ottoman positions in Bosnia. It is unknown whether Tomaš engaged with the Pope regarding his dispute with the Despot, but in any case, the Curia issued a task to the Archbishop of Esztergom in early March to mediate their reconciliation.[782] By the end of winter 1450, broader actions were taken to reconcile the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot, although sources only partially shed light on this. Preserved data from March, when Tomaš's envoys arrived in Ragusa, indicate this fact.[783] In mid-March, Tomaš's envoy, Restoje Milohna, stayed in Ragusa, conveying the king's demands for the Ragusans to investigate the despot's plans regarding the disputes with Tomaš, which would then be reported to the Bosnian king. Tomaš hoped that through the Ragusans serving in the despot's court, the Ragusan authorities could learn of the despot's stance. This proposal was, however, not approved by the Ragusan councilors.[784] By accepting such requests, the Ragusans would become Tomaš's spies at the

[781] (17. 4. 1450) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 344-345.

[782] (1. 3. 1450) Iorga, *Notes* II, 438-439. Paulus Lukcsics, *Diplomata pontificum saec. XV*, II, Budapestini 1938, 274.

[783] The Ragusans started a discussion about the letter for King Tomaš 17. 3. 1450. Cons. Rog. XI, 168v.

[784] "de respondendo Restoe ambasiatori regis Bossine qualiter dominatio intellexit eius ambasiatam quam fecit parte dicti regis de rebendo dominationem se intromittere inter dominum despotum et regem. Et quod procurabunt dominatio scire intentionem domini despot super facto diferentie inter dominum despotum et regem existentis. Et quod quoniam erit informata dominatio de intentione dicti domini despoti facient ipsum regem scire". The second proposal was adopted: "Secunda pars est de respondendo aliter". It was further adopted: "de induciando super predicta causa"; "de induciando ad diem lune" (22. 3. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 172.

despot's court, which the authorities could not accept. Postponing further discussion, they adopted a proposal for the Ragusan authorities to send a letter to the despot, inquiring about the previously discussed agreement, and to subsequently inform Tomaš of the information they received.[785] The Ragusans fulfilled their promise to the Bosnian envoys over the following months. In early June, a decision was made to send a letter to Tomaš, which was to contain information obtained from the despot's response.[786] Despite the Ragusans' willingness, it seems that the problematic basis of the conflict between Tomaš and Đurađ, centered around the ownership of Srebrenica, could not be resolved in 1450 due to the fact that the Bosnian king was not willing to surrender the significant mining town.

The Bosnian king's activity towards the Serbian despot in March 1450 must be observed through the lens of unsettled relations with the Ottomans. The chronic vulnerability of the king's possessions led him to seek assistance from an eastern neighbor who had gained considerable influence with the sultan and Ottoman officials in recent years. The disrupted relationship between the despot and Hunyadi, who had managed to negotiate the annulment of promises made to Đurađ by Pope Nicholas V (1447-1455) a year earlier, aligned with the intentions of the Bosnian king.[787] By the end of 1450, Tomaš was maintaining communication with Hunyadi through the mediation of the Ragusans.[788] During the summer of 1450, the Pope sought to strengthen Tomaš's position against his opponents. He sent an envoy to Bosnia with the aim of granting forgiveness to all those who joined the

[785] "respondendi domino Restoe ambaxiatori regis Bossine quod dominatio scribet domino despoto pro habendo informationem super facto acordii de quo locutus fuit et secundum quod habuerit ab ipso domino despoto super hoc, dominatio postea scribet maiestati regis secundum quod ei videbitur super hoc" (23. 3. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 172v. "respondendi residuo ambaxiate exponite parte regis Boxine per dominum Restoe eius ambaxiatorem secundum quod fuit arrengatum". Ibid.

[786] The proposal was not adopted: "de faciendo tres qui ordinare et ordinatum reportare debeant literam scribendam regi Bosine super facto responsionis habite a domino despoto", instead this proposal was adopted: "de dando libertatem domino Rectori et suo consilio ad scribendam dictam literam" (5. 6. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 202.

[787] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 374. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 264. Spremić, *Despot*, 411.

[788] (6. 11. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 260.

Bosnian king's army in the war against his enemies.[789] In light of subsequent events, it is correct to conclude that the involvement of Ragusa and Rome in the conflict between the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot in 1450 did not achieve significant success.

[789] Spremić, *Despot*, 413.

War between Herzog Stjepan and Ragusa (1451–1454)

During the early 1450s, a series of accumulated problems in the relationship between Herzog Stjepan and the Ragusans began to emerge on the Bosnian political scene. The root of these issues lay in the fact that, amid the growing need for finances, Herzog Stjepan consistently worked towards achieving a greater degree of autonomy from Ragusa's economic supremacy. Kosača's activities included the organization of an independent weaving workshop, the sale of salt in Novi, as well as the increase of customs duties in Drijeva, for which he threatened to relocate the marketplace to the interior of his territory.[790] By imposing a special tax on the Ragusan merchants, which involved collecting an additional fee for the passage of livestock from other areas into Ragusa, the frequent economic flow between the Republic and the Despotate was directly endangered.[791] Ragusa's response was to make decisions to halt trade through Stjepan's territory, which was intended to result in the economic isolation of this part of the Bosnian state. The passage of Ragusa's subjects and goods through the herzog's territory was halted in July, and in December 1450, the authorities issued new prohibitions to all its merchants in Bosnia and the Despotate.[792] By mid-1450, the Ragusan authorities were issuing special permits at its discretion for passage through herzog's territory. During July and August 1450, the export of weapons to the Despotate and the arrival of the despot's *čelnik* Pasqual through

[790] Ćorović, *Historija*, 490.

[791] (7. 11. 1450) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 43v-44. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 128.

[792] The Ragusan authorities repeated the decision to ban trade with Kosača's possessions on several occasions. (18. 7. 1450) (23. 7. 1450) (5. 12. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 217, 218v, 271. "Rector de Ragusi cum el suo conseio habiando cum altre volte amoni di li mercadanti nostri se trouano in le parte de Bosna che se guardano de vignire ne mandar lo suo auer per lo paexe de chercech ... Et similis littera facta fuit et missa in partibus Sclauonie, Smedreui et alibi. Et similis littera facta et missa in Pristina et ad Nouamontem et per illa loca" (December 1450) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 54.

Stjepan's territory were permitted.[793] However, a month later, the envoy of Duke Ivaniš was not granted permission to export goods along the same route.[794] Although these were economic disputes typical of Bosnian-Ragusan relations in the 15th century, further escalation of events led to a political crisis that, due to intricate diplomatic relations, attracted a wide range of participants from Bosnia and its neighboring regions.

In order to resolve the situation that had arisen, the Ragusans naturally turned to their sovereigns at the Buda court for assistance. However, Hunyadi's involvement with the herzog and the Bosnian king during November 1450 did not significantly change the situation.[795] The constellation of relations among the most important political figures in Bosnia and the neighboring regions did not favor Ragusa's requests. With the death of Duke Ivaniš Pavlović at the end of 1450, King Tomaš had the need to reconcile with Herzog Stjepan due to the loss of a long-standing ally.[796] At the beginning of 1451, relatively peaceful relations were established between Stjepan and Tomaš, who still had a problem with the Serbian despot.[797] On the other hand, Despot Đurađ, a regular friend of the Republic, continued to be in conflict with Governor Hunyadi. The Ragusans had a clear understanding of the influence of Balkan magnates at the Porte, and only Kosača and Đurađ were able to negotiate significant permits with Sultan Murad II.

Political changes in the Balkans during the first half of 1451

With the change at the Ottoman court in early 1451, when Murad II's son Mehmed II (1451-1481) took power after his father's death, there was a reorganization of political figures in the immediate vicinity of Bosnia. With the ascension of the new sultan, Herzog Stjepan was able to redirect the situation in his favor in the spring of 1451, when through significant financial

[793] (27. 7. 1450) (5. 8. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 220, 224v.

[794] (12. 9. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 238v.

[795] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 149. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 303.

[796] (28. 11. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 268. (17. 12. 1450) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 54v-55.

[797] (28. 1. 1451) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 477. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 150.

expenses, he negotiated permission for a more aggressive engagement against the Republic, including permission to attack Konavle.[798] It appears that the simultaneous involvement of the Ragusans at the court of Buda, as well as the arrival of Hunyadi's envoys during the spring to meet with King Tomaš and Herzog Stjepan, did not yield lasting results.[799] The changing political dynamics within the Hungarian state did not provide the Ragusan authorities with a powerful enough leverage to secure significant influence over neighboring states. Although the conflict on the southern borders of the Bosnian Kingdom during the spring months was limited to economic blockades, the Ragusans were compelled to engage more actively in diplomacy in order to neutralize the privileges that the herzog had negotiated at the Ottoman court. Unable to seek a solution to the crisis in Hungary due to their conflict with the Ottomans, the Ragusans once again turned to the tried-and-tested method of conducting business with the Ottoman court, which was facilitated through Despot Đurađ. Due to the change of power on the Ottoman throne, the despot undertook specific measures to reaffirm the earlier status of the Despotate in relation to the Ottoman state during this period.[800]

The first significant diplomatic contacts between the Ragusans and the Serbian despot regarding their conflict with Stjepan were recorded in early March 1451. Following the adoption of a decision by the Senate, a letter was sent to the despot and the Ragusans in Smederevo.[801] Through this letter, the Ragusans informed the despot that Kosača had sent Ivan Vlahović to the Ottoman court with the task of obtaining permission to attack Ragusa, and that he had already begun gathering an army for this purpose. The Ragusans were given the task of asking Đurađ to send envoys to the new sultan who would explain that the herzog's actions had caused damage to

[798] Ćorović, *Historija*, 491. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 117. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 297. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 148.

[799] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 298. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 149-150. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 304.

[800] Mihailović, *Uspomene*, 32. Spremić, *Despot*, 424-425.

[801] (6. 4. 1451) (8. 4. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 48v, 49v. The contact between the Ragusans and the despot regarding the conflict with Herzog Stjepan can be traced back to the beginning of March 1451. (1. 3. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 20v.

the despot due to the fact that he occupied the roads through which merchants move towards the Despotate, thus preventing them from fulfilling their obligations to the sultan. The envoys were also supposed to seek permission for the despot's attack on the herzog's possessions. The authorities allocated 200 ducats for this undertaking, and the Ragusan nobles from the Despotate were to accompany the despot's envoys only if there was a need for such a move.[802] The Ragusan letter makes it clear that the authorities attempted to portray their situation as much more difficult than it actually was. The ban on merchants crossing Stjepan's territory was a result of Ragusa's counteraction to the imposition of new economic measures in this area. Several days later, the Ragusans sent a response to the letter of their nobles from Smederevo, composed at the end of March 1451. In the letter from the despot's court, they were informed that the despot's *čelnik*, Pasqual Sorgo, was with Sultan Mehmed II on a mission through which Đurađ sought to negotiate the confirmation of previous privileges inherited from the time of Murad II. They informed their subjects in the Despotate that an Ottoman envoy had arrived at Herzog Stjepan's court in early April to regulate his position with the new sultan. The authorities ordered that the Ragusans in the Despotate negotiate the sending of a combined delegation to the herzog, composed of both the despot's and Ragusa's subjects. In the same instructions, they suggested that the despot should complain about the damages suffered due to the trade embargo and emphasize that he would stand on the side of the Republic in this conflict.[803] The Ragusan authorities sent a

[802] (7. 4. 1451) (8. 4. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 54, 55-55v. "Et anche secundo semo auixati et sapiamo del certo ha mandato ala Porta Iuan Vlachouich suo ambassador per impetrar de farne tuto quel mal che pora et tuorne la contrada de Canal et oprimerne et tuto altro zo che pora per tanto habiando nui grandissimo fede et speranza in la magnificentia del signor despot che in ogne cossa che fosse per ben et honor nostro non se speragneria per nui comeper soi bon amixi, et deuotissimi cum gratia confidencia" (8. 4. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 70.

[803] "voriamo che vui ser Alouixe et ser Damian debiate esser cum Illustro signor despot et pregarlo per parte nostra chel se troua el ceonich alla porta che el ge voi scriuer chel debia impetrar et far per ogni nostro come sapera che lo imperator scriua expresamente a chercech commandandoli chel se debia retrar et remouerse de farne tal nouitade et per modo alcuno non se debia impazar et le cosse nostre per che quello hauemo lo tignemo etc. … Et prouiderete al tuto chel signor mande uno

letter on the same day to *čelnik* Sorgo, stressing that they are not happy with his departure on a mission on behalf of the despot.[804]

In the spring of 1451, the Ragusan involvement at the despot's court raised several questions on which the sources do not allow us to take an informed stance. A significant aspect of the political situation at that time between Bosnia and the Despotate revolved around the relationship between Herzog Stjepan and Despot Đurađ. By imposing unusual economic measures, Stjepan triggered the Ragusan reaction that consisted of an economic blockade of Herzog's possessions, simultaneously cutting off economic trade between Ragusa and the Despotate. Đurađ's stance towards Stjepan's economic policy in 1450, which directly affected his subjects and state revenues, is unknown. As previously mentioned, in April 1450, the two allies made joint efforts in Venice to secure the return of the despot's possessions in Zeta. According to Ragusan reports from April 1451, when reminding the despot that the trade embargo endangered his revenues, one gets the impression that Đurađ did not play a significant role in this conflict in previous months. The Ragusans evidently had information that the despot, with the sultan's permission, could be persuaded to engage militarily in Bosnia. Changes in the relationship between the herzog and the despot may have occurred at the beginning of 1451 when news of a truce between Kosača and King Tomaš became known. Despite the encouragement of the Ragusan authorities, motivated by their own interests, the despot could not engage in military action against the herzog because of unresolved issues with King Tomaš. The long-standing conflict between them did not cease at that time. In late April 1451, Tomaš's delegation led by envoy Nikola Testa arrived in Venice. The purpose of the delegation was to secure Venetian neutrality in the event of a war between Tomaš and Đurađ, as well as to

de vui a posta fata per tal caxon et andando uno de vui voramo habiate libertade de spender come e dito et andando altri come e dito in la prima … [71bisv] digando che le dite nouitade non solamente tornano in danno ali Ragusei ma etiamdio al deto signor despot per che non siando li pasi auerti et le vie libertate e segure come solenano esser li mercadanti non pono andar ne pratichar nel paexe del signor despot [72]" (13. 4. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 71vbis-72.

[804] (13. 4. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 72-72v.

attempt to improve the Bosnian king's position with the sultan through the Venetian Senate. Tomaš's delegation received a promise from the Venetians that they wouldn't interfere in the conflict between Bosnia and the Despotate and that they would work towards establishing better relations between the Bosnian king and the sultan.[805] The appearance of the Bosnian delegation before the Venetian authorities regarding their stance on the conflict between Tomaš and Đurađ should be seen as a form of communication about the king's plans, as the Venetians had no real basis for interfering in their relationship. It is difficult to decipher Tomaš's plans. It is quite certain that, despite the fact that he secured himself from Herzog Stjepan's interference, a potential confrontation with the despot remained a dangerous endeavor due to the Ottomans. Thus, in the spring of 1451, the Bosnian king joined a group of neighboring powers who saw an opportunity to secure their positions during the changes on the Ottoman throne. The Venetian authorities took diplomatic measures to mediate peace between the Bosnian king and the Ottomans, but the results of this mission are unknown.[806]

By expanding their diplomatic network, the Ragusans had already anticipated King Tomaš's participation on their side during the spring of 1451. In mid-April, they once again approached Hunyadi with proposals for his joint engagement with King Tomaš against Herzog Stjepan. The proposed framework involved capturing Drijeva, Hum, and Hodidjed, which would bring significant benefits to the governor.[807] The Ragusan authorities reaffirmed the earlier prohibitions in April despite the merchants' attempts to obtain permission for free passage and transport through the herzog's territory.[808] The losses caused by economic blockades and the fear of Stjepan's military attack motivated the Ragusans to further engage with Despot

[805] (29. 4. 1451) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 378. Ljubomir Jovanović, "Ratovanje hercega Stjepana s Dubrovnikom 1451-1454", *GNČ* X, Beograd 1888, 116. Hrabak, "Venecija i bosanska država", 427-473. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 255.

[806] Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 359-360.

[807] (14. 4. 1451) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 497. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 151. Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*, 117-118. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 305.

[808] (28. 4. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 63.

Đurađ. In mid-May, envoys were sent from Ragusa to Smederevo with gifts worth a thousand perpers, but their tasks were only revealed in a letter sent at the end of the month to *čelnik* Sorgo, who returned to the despot's court after the failure in Edirne.[809] The Ragusan in the despot's service was not able to accomplish the set goals directed from Smederevo as he did not find Mehmed II there. Ragusan authorities mentioned an earlier delegation sent to the despot in an attempt to motivate him once again to mediate with the sultan. Sorgo informed them in a previous letter that the despot would send a new delegation to the Porte since Mehmed II had returned to his court, while the authorities responded expressing hope that their nobleman would also be part of this delegation. They believed that the united delegation should seek confirmation of Ragusa's previous privileges and the sultan's revocation of the privileges granted to Herzog Stjepan against the Republic.[810] The Ragusans expanded their diplomatic activity to the west, towards Rome, where they aimed to discredit the herzog on religious grounds through their envoys and prevent him from hiring mercenaries from the western coast of the Adriatic.[811]

In the whirlwind of diplomatic efforts in Ragusa at the end of winter in 1451, sources do not indicate their direct involvement with King Tomaš. During the process of sending the mentioned delegation to Despot Đurađ, the Ragusan councilors rejected the proposal to send a delegation to King

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[809] (11. 5. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 65v-66. (15. 5. 1451) Cons. Maius IX, 192.

[810] (22. 5. 1451) (24. 5. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 72v-73. "Et perche abiamo deliberato de mandar la nostra ambassata al prefato signor et credemo che auanti el vignir della detta ambassata dela el signor mandara la soa ambassata el imperator Turcho siando retornato in Adrinopoli, in la qual ambassata speremo che serete voy pertanto vogliate cerchar apresso lo detto signor al qual copia cio scriuemo pienamente che li piaza commetere ouer a voi ouer a che andara in detta ambassata che debiate cerchar cum ogni studio e solicitudine ala porta del Turcho pro parte del prefato signor despot che li priuilegii altre volte a noi concessi per mezo del detto signor despot dal imperator passato siano confirmati per lo presente imperator. Et che quelli priuilegi li quali fosseno fatti in fauor de cherzech Stipan contra la nostra Republica siano in totum reuocati annullati" (24. 5. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 81v. (25. 5. 1451) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 568.

[811] (24. 5. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 81v.

Tomaš too.[812] It is certain that Ragusa, Bobovac, and Smederevo corresponded during the spring months, but no written record of the negotiations exists. Events from June 1451 point to this conclusion. At that time, the Ragusan Senate had a debate on sending a joint delegation to the despot and Ban Matko, as well as a separate delegation to the Bosnian king,[813] eventually expanding the geographical scope of the same delegation to include a visit to King Tomaš.[814] In the background of these decisions, there was a discussion about reconciling the Bosnian king and the despot, but its details are unknown. There is no information as to which side initiated the reconciliation. In mid-June, the debate on instructions for the commission was concluded, and after a few days, they left Ragusa.[815] Observing the text of the letter to the Ragusan envoys, it is apparent that these negotiations lasted for a considerable amount of time. The Ragusans expressed their satisfaction to Tomaš regarding his proposal for an alliance. Joint action implied the participation of the Ragusans, Tomaš, and Đurađ, but it depended on reconciliation between the king and the despot. The Ragusans suggested to Tomaš that the disputed segment of their relationship, the fortress of Srebrenik, be temporarily placed under their control to facilitate the reconciliation agreement in a safer environment. Upon arriving in Smederevo, the envoys expressed the Republic's joy over the return of the despot's daughter, Mara, the widow of Murad II, whom the new sultan had returned to her father. The despot was successful in securing the return of parts of his territory that had been held by the Ottomans until that time during negotiations with the sultan. Once again, Đurađ was requested to negotiate with the sultan to revoke the privileges granted to the herzog and to influence Stjepan to lift the trade em-

[812] (1. 3. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 20v.

[813] (10. 6. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 77-77v.

[814] (13. 6. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 79.

[815] "de firmando correctionem comissionis ambassiatorum nostrorum iturorum ad dominum despotum, videlicet, ad partem que aspectat maiestatis regis Bosine de domino despoto" The second proposal was adopted: "de corrigendo iterorum"; it was further adopted: "de firmando dictam correctionem factam" (15. 6. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 80v. "possendi declarare in comissione ambassiatorum pro facto castri de Strebernich." (17. 6. 1451) Ibid., 81v.

bargo between Ragusa and the Despotate. This was the occasion on which the Ragusan model for resolving the conflict between the despot and King Tomaš was presented to Đurađ, suggesting that the Republic take control of Srebrenik until the agreement was finalized. If no agreement was reached, Srebrenik would be returned to Tomaš's control. The Ragusans sought to motivate the despot by allowing their subjects to carry out diplomatic missions in his service,[816] a practice they had strongly condemned a year earlier.[817] King Tomaš's acceptance of an alliance with the Republic and the Despotate would also mark the end of good relations between Tomaš and Stjepan. It appears that Tomaš's decision to cede Srebrenik, with the aim of reconciling with the Serbian despot, was driven by the threat of Ottoman intervention in resolving conflicts along the southern borders of the Kingdom. Governor Hunyadi also joined the reconciliation trend, and the Ragusans learned of his plans to reconcile with Despot Đurađ in June 1451 from a letter sent by their envoy from Monastar.[818] Hunyadi's rapprochement with the Serbian despot was conditioned by similar motives as Tomaš's, aiming to mediate peace with Sultan Mehmed II.

After visiting their allies, the Ragusan delegation stayed in Smederevo. According to new instructions from the Ragusan authorities in early July 1451, we learned that Stjepan had managed to seize Konavle with his army. The Ragusans urged their delegation to influence the despot to send his envoys to Mehmed II and demand the restitution of Konavle and compensation for the damages caused by the herzog during the war. The delegation was supposed to request the sultan to send troops to Stjepan's territories or allow the despot to launch a military attack. For the future mission to the Porte, the Ragusans were prepared to pay whatever costs were necessary. They

[816] (17. 6. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XV, 1-4. Dinić, "Srebrenik", 358-359. Popović, *Mara Branković*, 120. About the confirmation of the despot's position towards Mehmed II, see: Mihailović, *Uspomene*, 32.

[817] (1. 6. 1450) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 34v.

[818] (17. 6. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 82. Lett. di Lev. XV, 150. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 506. Franc Babinger, *Mehmed Osvajač i njegovo doba*, Matica srpska, Novi Sad 1968, 60-61. Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*, 118. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 305.

mentioned that they had reached a verbal truce with the herzog to minimize further damages. They asked the despot to negotiate permission for an attack on the Kosača's territories. Once again, the despot was made aware of the significance of his reconciliation with the Bosnian king due to their joint campaign against Stjepan.[819] In mid-July, the Ragusans urged the despot to engage with the sultan, as they had received information that Stjepan's delegation was heading in the same direction during those days. In a letter to the *čelnik* Pasqual Sorgo, they requested that he go to the Porte in the service of the despot's envoy, with the main task of obtaining confirmation of the return of Konavle to the Republic. For the purpose of legal clarification regarding the position of Konavle, the Ragusans sent charters issued by Dukes Sandalj and Radoslav, as well as a charter from Mehmed's father, in which he granted them Trebinje, Vrm, and Klobuk during the Konavle war in exchange for an annual payment of 500 ducats.[820] In addition to this letter, the Ragusans sent a letter to Michael Resti, the envoy at King Tomaš. The authorities eagerly awaited the reconciliation between Tomaš and Đurađ, after which they planned to finalize the signing of the alliance agreement. The extent to which the future strategy of the Ragusan authorities depended on this peace can be seen in the instructions given to Resti to inform them promptly upon the conclusion of the negotiations.[821] Seeking to maintain the despot's focus on mediating in their favor at the Porte, the Ragusan authorities occasionally made decisions to send gifts to Smederevo and allowed the despot's subjects to export goods through Stjepan's territory during the brief truce.[822]

The reconciliation between King Tomaš and the despot did not take long. At the end of July, their envoys sent a letter to Ragusa informing them that a reconciliation had been reached between the two neighbors. The authorities sent gifts to Smederevo and expressed delight at the despot's takeover of Srebrenik. Ragusans were also informed of the peace agreement between the

[819] (8. 7. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 153-153v. (8. 7. 1451) Cons. Rog XII, 98v.

[820] Lett. di Lev. XV, 144-144v. (17. 7. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 103v.

[821] (18. 7. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XV, 152.

[822] (31. 7. 1451) (5. 8. 1451) (8. 8. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 112, 116v, 118v.

despot and Hunyadi, which had been sealed by the marriage of the despot's granddaughter and the governor's son. Around the same time, Đurađ's envoys returned from the Ottoman court. The authorities were informed that the despot would send Damian Georgio to Mehmed II to announce peace between the Despotate and the Hungarians. With this delegation, the Ragusans tried to get confirmation from the sultan to cede Novi and Dračevica to them. It was of particular interest to the Ragusans to learn that the despot had returned the charters to the herzog and would engage in military action against their former ally. They pleaded with Đurađ to assist Tomaš in his intentions against Stjepan. They proposed that the despot attract Kosača's subjects to his territory by offering privileges and engage his men in Luštica and Grbalj to disrupt Stjepan's possessions. The authorities emphasized that they would continue the vigorous war against Stjepan and send permanent envoys to King Tomaš's court.[823] The Ragusans' intentions to use the despot's subjects in Zeta to threaten Stjepan's possessions were hindered by the crisis sparked by the conflict between Stefanica Crnojević and the Venetians against Đurađ in this region.[824] By achieving a higher degree in the quality of relations in the political triangle composed of Tomaš, Đurađ, and Hunyadi, the Ragusans secured a more stable foundation for forming an alliance against Herzog Stjepan.

The actions of King Tomaš and Despot Đurađ with the Ragusans

The delegation to King Tomaš, which the Ragusans mentioned in the letter to the despot, soon set off towards Bosnia. A few days after sending the letter to Smederevo, instructions were prepared for Aloisio Goze, who headed to Tomaš's court. Before leaving for Bosnia, Goze went to Ban Petar Talovac with the task of informing him about the reconciliation between Đurađ and

[823] (13. 8. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XV, 138-139. Cons. Rog. XII, 119v, 121. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 514-517 (with the wrong date). Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 375. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 327. Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, 203-204. Jovanović, "Ratovanje hercega", 143-144. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 272. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 119. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 161. Spremić, *Despot*, 428-429, 435-436. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 307. The text of the contract between Đurađ and Hunyadi was drawn up on August 7, 1451. Teleki, *Hunyadiak* X, 305-312.

[824] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 376.

Tomaš, to whom the despot had promised assistance at the Porte, and offered his mediation with the Bosnian king. They also emphasized that the Bosnian king had reconciled with the Vojsalić nobility. Upon arriving in Bosnia, Goze was supposed to remind Tomaš of the promise according to which, after reconciling with the despot, he was supposed to enter into an alliance with Ragusa against the herzog, for which the envoy had a drafted treaty plan. In previous months, Tomaš had sent envoys to Ragusa led by Restoje, who proposed the formation of this alliance. The Ragusans promised to support Tomaš's land campaign with their ships. They also conveyed news from Smederevo that the despot had returned earlier charters to Stjepan, that he would support the king's action, and that he had sent Damian Georgio to Mehmed II to secure permission for the proposed campaigns. As potential allies in this war, they highlighted the Vojsalić and Pavlović families, with whom the Ragusan authorities would carry out diplomatic missions. The proposed deadline for the attack was mid-September, when the oral truce that the Republic had concluded with the herzog would also expire. According to the mentioned plan, after the war, Dračevica, Novi, Trebinje, Površ, Lug, Mičevac, Klobuk, and Vrsinje were supposed to belong to Ragusa, and the Ragusans would support King Tomaš in Smederevo and Buda.[825] An additional advantage for the Ragusans was the fact that Stjepan's son, Vladislav, had rebelled against him. Through urgent diplomatic efforts, the Ragusans managed to negotiate Vladislav's charter of alliance with the Republic in mid-August.[826]

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[825] "Ben vi conforto che ora che lo Re e in paxe e concordia cum lo signor despot … signor despot sa promesso al prefato Re di darli ogni aiuto e fauor tanto ala Porta del Turcho quanto altroe … e dandoue audientia li direte: Serenissimo Re habiando la Rectore et zentilhomeni di Ragusa sentito di la paxe la qual e fata e conclusa tra a vostra maiesta e lo signor despot ne ha recevuto gran piaser e consolation … [89] … Auisando la vostra serenita come lo Rector e zentilhomeni de Ragusa hano havuto lettere dal signor despot e da li nostri ambasadori che sonno dela e da li zentilhomeni i quali sono del suo conseio secreto come lo dicto signor despot ha intention et e disposto in tuto quello chel poia et ha mandato le scriture a chercech le qual haueua cum lui [89v]" (18. 8. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 89-89v. Ibid., 90. (16. 8. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 123. Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, 204-205. Boris Nilević, "Učešće vojvode Petra i kneza Nikole Pavlovića u političkom životu srednjovjekovne Bosne", *Prilozi* XVI/17, Sarajevo 1980, 62.

[826] Ćorović, *Historija*, 497-498. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 300. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 160-162.

During the autumn of 1451, the Republic's territory once again became the target of the herzog's attacks. In early September, the authorities informed the despot and their nobility in Smederevo that Stjepan had resumed attacks in Župa Dubrovačka (Breno). Letters from the sultan arrived in Smederevo, the content of which is unknown. The Ragusans urged Đurađ even more energetically to engage in the restitution of the lost territories. They were willing to pay an amount of 150,000 ducats to the sultan and an additional 50,000 to the viziers if the sultan agreed to cede them all the possessions and towns of the Kosača family. They agreed to have the alliance members pay the tributes that Stjepan paid to the sultan. However, they emphasized that they would not be willing to bear annual expenses for the Konavle region, considering it was their heritage that they had previously bought from the Bosnian nobility. They sought to avoid the despot's proposal, which involved sending their envoys to the sultan. According to their authorities' plan, the division of Stjepan's possessions would be based on the premise that the despot would receive the *tute quelle contrade fina Drina*, while the Republic would take over the previously mentioned areas. The remaining territories would be subject to negotiation between the king and the despot. The Republic was willing to pay the sultan 500-600 ducats a year if they were to acquire the herzog's territories. Copies of earlier charters issued by Murad II to the Ragusans for Konavle, Trebinje, Vrm and Klobuk, which were never put into effect, were delivered to the despot through these envoys. The legitimacy of this action was found by the authorities in a two-decade-old case when Sandalj and Đurađ redeemed part of Tvrtko's possessions, whereby Zvonik and Usora belonged to the despot. The plan was for the despot's envoys to visit the Bosnian king, with one Ragusan nobleman joining this mission. At the end of the letter, the Ragusans complained to the despot about his son-in-law Ulrich of Cili, who was assisting their opponent by sending him craftsmen to make weapons.[827]

[827] (2. 9. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 132v; "Nuy hauemo sempre cognosudo e cognosemo che li fatti nostri meglio e cum mancho spexa se pono conzar ala Porta pro le man del signor despot cha per le man de nostri ambasatori perche ogni gran cossa che ha vogliuto el prefato signor ala porta ha obtenuta como se vede per lo paese el qual e stato restitiuto dal imperator imperator al detto signor el per lo

Clearly, the Ragusan instructions to Smederevo reflected the same approach to the conflict with the Bosnian nobility that had been adopted two decades earlier during the war with Radoslav Pavlović. Ragusa's hopes were based on the shared approach of the Bosnian king and Serbian despot, which involved dealings with the sultan. On the other hand, despite more stable relations, the sultan constantly posed a threat to Bosnia and the Despotate. Early in September, discussions were held in Ragusa regarding the sending of envoys to Daut-Bay. For this purpose, they consulted the despot regarding his experience with Ottoman officials.[828]

Moving along a delicate line that separated their dealings with the Ottomans and becoming their tributary, the Ragusans focused their attention on the second part of the plan that was to be executed by King Tomaš at the end of autumn 1451. In a letter from the beginning of November, the Ragusans were informed about the return of the Bosnian envoy from the sultan's court. They emphasized their readiness to pay the king 6,000 ducats if he sets out with an army within three months, promising assistance by sea and land.[829] Regarding military engagement, Tomaš basically agreed to the Ragusan proposals, which were crowned by the signing of the alliance agreement at the end of the year.[830] During the winter of 1451, Hunyadi's plans regarding his previous reconciliation with Despot Đurađ were revealed. By the end of November, through the despot's mediation, a reconciliation between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire was reached, which was

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fatto de Stebrniza el pro ogni altro fatto… chel signor despot pro si e per lo Re de Bossina e per nuy faxesse promessa al imperator Turcho di ducati centocinquanta milia al visieri del ducato 50 millia per tuto lo teritorio e citad del suo e nostro inimigo Stiepan Vochzich … E lo signor despoto e lo Re e nuy [91v] haueressemo nostra intentio e se faraue esso signor dispot mazor signore perche tutte quelle contrade fina Drina et altre contrade toraue esso signor despot e lo Re toraue quello che fusse di acordio col detto signor despot et a nuy bastaraue queste contrade a nuy visine qui al mar per le qual nuy pagaremo per lo rata delli detti ducati 200 milia [92]" (1. 9. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 91v-92. Lett. di Lev. XV, 135-135v. Restius, *Chronica*, 320.

828 (14. 9. 1451) (29. 9. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 138v-139, 146.

829 (17. 11. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 98v-99v. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 276. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 120.

830 (18. 12. 1451) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 118-121. Miklosich, *Monumenta*, 447-450. Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, 240.

confirmed in April of the following year. According to this peace agreement, Herzog Stjepan was required to return the occupied Ragusan territories. Taking advantage of his role as a mediator, the despot managed to secure guarantees for his possessions in Bosnia, which most likely included the fortress of Srebrenik, received from Tomaš earlier in the year, but could also include other possessions. Bosnia and the Despotate, as states caught in the midst of powerful forces, were mentioned in this agreement as states whose foreign policy orientation was directed by others. According to power dynamics at the time, their fate was firmly tied to Ottoman superiority over the Hungarians.[831] The preserved sources from 1451 do not permit the reconstruction of correspondence between Ragusa, Bobovac, and Smederevo. The diplomatic missions from Ragusa to the allies were frequent despite the recorded harsh winter at the end of the year.[832] Đurađ's negotiations with the sultan yielded results by the end of 1451. The Ragusan authorities postponed sending a letter to Bosnia in late December due to the anticipated arrival of an Ottoman envoy arriving in Ragusa for arbitration.[833]

Upon the arrival of the envoy of the sultan in Ragusa and Konavle in January 1452, the occupied territories were returned to the Republic, and a reconciliation was arranged between the conflicting parties.[834] There was a correspondence between the Ragusan authorities and the despot and their nobility in Smederevo in January and February about which we do not know much in depth. The Ragusan reports also contained information regarding the ongoing ceasefire agreement.[835] In early February, the Ragusans sent

[831] (13. 4. 1452) Neculai Iorga, *Acte si fragmente cu privire la istoria Romnilor*, III, Bucuresti 1897, 25. Babinger, *Mehmed Osvajač*, 62. Ćirković, "Despot Đurađ Branković i ugarsko-turski pregovori", 104-106. Spremić, "Tributari", 38, 46. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 319. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 364.

[832] (4. 9. 1451) (15. 9. 1451) (17. 9. 1451) (24. 9. 1451) (29. 9. 1451) (2. 10. 1451) (28. 10. 1451) (15. 11. 1451) (25. 11. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 135, 139v, 141v, 143v, 144v, 145v, 148v, 158v, 169v, 178v.

[833] (27. 12. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 196v.

[834] Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 121-122. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 308. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 365.

[835] (7. 1. 1452) (11. 1. 1452) (29. 1. 1452) (24. 2. 1452) Cons. Rog. XII, 203v, 206v, 217, 234v. (26. 1. 1452) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 573.

Đurađ letters that Stjepan had written to them.[836] They maintained intensive correspondence with King Tomaš as well, delivering a copy of the cease-fire agreement reached with the herzog in mid-February.[837] However, the achieved reconciliation did not last long. In letters to the *čelnik* Pasqual Sorgo and their envoys in Smederevo, the authorities wrote in mid-March that Stjepan had once again disrupted Konavle. According to their knowledge, Hunyadi's envoys en route to the sultan's court were expected to arrive in Smederevo. The authorities sought to negotiate the departure of the despot's *čelnik* to the Porte, along with Ragusan envoys. The noblemen Ragnina and Gondola were supposed to consult with the despot regarding the distribution of the amount of 800 ducats they intended to spend at the Porte in order to obtain privileges. Previously, a joint mission of the despot and the Bosnian king had been present at the Ottoman court, with Tomaš seeking to regulate his position with Mehmed II, and the Ragusan officials had been trying to obtain information about their return.[838] The authorities intended to borrow the required sum of 1,000 ducats from merchants in the Despotate.[839] In early April, the Ragusans joyfully reported to Smederevo that Vladislav, supported by Vlatković, had occupied almost the entire Hum region. As part of its plan, the Republic intended to send assistance to Vladislav, mentioning that the despot should do the same, as well as to recommend the herzog's son to King Tomaš. The Ragusans attempted to take advantage of the arrival of the

[836] "de dando libertatem illis tribus qui fient ad scribendum ad chercech de scribendo domino despoto et nobilibus nostris qui sunt in Smedreuo et mittendo domino despoto litteram quam habuimus a chercech" (11. 2. 1452) Cons. Rog. XII, 225v. The letters were delivered a day later. (12. 2. 1452) Ibid., 227.

[837] (18. 2. 1452) Cons. Rog. XII, 230v.

[838] (19. 3. 1452) Cons. Rog. XII, 255v, 256v. "hauemo deliberato de mandar la nostra ambassata a la Porta, la qual ambassata volemo che siano ser Biasio de Ragnina e ser Jacomo Mar. de Gondola quali sonno de la ali quali hauemo scrito oportunamente sopra cio. Et anderemo a far niente in ordene li presenti li quali nuy merndaremo di la per portar ala Porta" (20. 3. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 121. "de questo direte al signor dispot pregandolo che la piaza de mandar cum vuy per sua parte ser Pasqual ceonich". Ibid., 122. In mid-March, the Ragusans simultaneously reported to their allies in Bosnia, Despotovina and Hungary. (17. 3. 1452) Cons. Rog. XII, 253v. At the time when the Ragusans decided to write to the despot about sending envoys to the Porte again, the king's envoy Restoje was in Ragusa. (21. 3. 1452) Ibid., 256v.

[839] (23. 3. 1452) Cons. Rog. XII, 259.

despot's army in Zeta due to the war against the Crnojevićs. They advised him to deploy up to two thousand soldiers who would launch an attack or at least intimidate him from the eastern borders of the Kosača's possessions.[840] However, the situation in Zeta, where the despot's commanders Altoman and Thomas Kantakuzenos suffered several defeats during 1452, did not allow for the implementation of Ragusans' ideas.[841]

During April 1452, a new Ottoman envoy arrived in Ragusa, once again taking the Ragusans to the Konavle region. In the background of these events, the armies of King Tomaš, Vladislav, and Vojsalić united.[842] Stjepan's reaction involved seeking closer ties with Venice, offering them Krajina and Drijeva territories to prevent them from falling into the hands of Ragusa or his adversaries in Bosnia. Although the Venetians occupied the offered areas in May, they withdrew their small army upon King Tomaš's arrival in Hum.[843] Further strategies implemented by Ragusa were designed to consolidate Vladislav's position within the circle of allies. The authorities informed him that they would correspond with Hungary and the Despotate on his behalf,[844] which was soon implemented. In early June, the Ragusans sent a letter to Aloisio Goze, who stayed at the king's court, emphasizing that they had received information from their nobles in Smederevo, as well as that Tomaš had resolved his position with the sultan. They also wrote that Đurađ had engaged with Hunyadi and the Hungarian nobility urging them not to support Kosača against Duke Petar Vojsalić and others, and how, according to the despot's claim, that issue was resolved. The involvement of the despot with the Cili family, who were

[840] "vi auisemo chome el conte Vladissau fiol del detto nostro inimigo reuelo contra el padre et con luy e la madre. Et ha preso Blagay. Et tutta la contrada de Chelmo exceto Lubuschi … chel nostro inimigo non possa prenaler contra el detto suo fiol che el signor despot perche abiando el detto inimigo caxon de atender altronde e non pora atender ala desfaton del fiolo pertanto ve cometemo che debiate narar al signor dispot la cossa como e passata el pregarlo che li piaza in ogni cossa dar aiuto, conseio e fauor al detto conte Vladissau" (3. 4. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 110.

[841] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 284. Ivan Božić, "Slom despotove vlasti u Zeti", in: *Istorija Crne Gore* II/2, 227. Božić, "Zetske vojvode", 190-191.

[842] Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 123-124. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 177-178.

[843] (12. 6. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 100. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 263-264.

[844] (18. 4. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 104v-107.

asked to be passive during this war, was of particular significance to the Ragusans.[845] The initiative to send envoys from Smederevo to Buda came from the Ragusans in mid-April, when they requested a stronger bond between Hunyadi and the king and his subjects in Bosnia.[846] Throughout the summer months, parallel correspondence was conducted with Tomaš, Vladislav, and Đurađ to keep all allies informed simultaneously.[847] The suspension of trade greatly harmed the finances of both Ragusa and the despot. Due to the despot's assistance to Ragusa in these events, the authorities sought alternative solutions for trading with the Despotate through Shkodra and Valona.[848]

The Ragusans found an alternative approach to resolving the conflict with Duke Stjepan in the middle of 1452. They decided to give up on the purchase of Kosača's possessions from the sultan, which they had previously written about to their envoys in June. The development of the situation at the Ottoman court favored their sudden change of plans. At the end of May, they received information through Smederevo that Hunyadi's envoy, Tomas Buday, and the despot's envoy, Vukosav, had returned from the Porte. They learned that Mehmed II had not agreed to the proposed framework for the purchase of the herzog's territories, and the sultan had decided to send an envoy to Ragusa again. They emphasized that the purchase of those territories would distance them from King Tomaš and Vladislav. The authorities informed the despot that Tomaš had hesitated to attack Kosača with his army while he was in Hum and eventually withdrew, doing nothing. Seeking to secure Stjepan's possessions for Vladislav, the Ragusans emphasized

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[845] "et anche el signor dispot ha scrito al deto conte de Cilia pro tal caxone e lo detti ambassadori ne hano scrito come el signor despot dise che non se debiamo dar mal animo per lo conte de Cilia ne pro altri Ungari perche luy ha proueduto ogni cossa al bisogno" (2. 6. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 105.

[846] "de scribendo literas commendatorias illustri domino despoto et illustri domino gubernatori et baronibus Ungarie pro facto domini regis Bossine, vayuode Vladissaui et vayouode Petar Voysalich" (17. 4. 1452) Cons. Rog. XII, 278v.

[847] (11. 4. 1452) (13. 4. 1452) Cons. Rog. XII, 273, 274v. (24. 5. 1452) (21. 6. 1452) (1. 7. 1452) (2. 8. 1452) (30. 8. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 16, 38, 44, 62v, 77v. (17. 6. 1452) (1. 7. 1452) Cons. Minus XIII, 70, 72. (17. 3. 1452) (19. 9. 1452) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 575, 578.

[848] (6. 5. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 5v. (1. 7. 1452) Ibid., 44v.

that they no longer believed it necessary to send their envoys to the sultan.[849] While the Ragusans harbored a decades-long fear of going to the Porte, Vladislav had to do so if he wanted to become the owner of his father's possessions. With the change in Ragusa's plans, the despot's stance towards the war was completely altered because, according to the previous agreement, a part of Stjepan's possessions that bordered Ragusa was supposed to be given to him. Despite this, Đurađ continued to support the Ragusans. The path to securing Vladislav's position led him through Smederevo to the Porte. At the end of June, the Ragusans allowed one of their envoys to go to the Despotate on a mission for Vladislav.[850]

At the beginning of July, another sultan's envoy arrived in Ragusa, accompanied by the despot's duke, Jakša.[851] Immediately upon their arrival, the authorities received the sultan's letter, copies of which were delivered to Tomaš and Vladislav, and it was decided to inform the despot about these events.[852] The work of the sultan's envoy in confirming Konavle and assessing the damage suffered by the Republic from Herzog Stjepan since the signing of the Hungarian-Ottoman peace treaty, did not proceed as the Ragusans expected. Although the Ottoman envoy had been in Ragusa for several months, according to their letter to Despot Đurađ, composed in early August, they believed that the activities of the Ottoman subject indicated his good relationship with the herzog, while on the other hand, he showed clear hostility towards the despot. In the same letter, they informed the despot that they had learned that King Tomaš, despite publicly expressing dissatisfaction, had secretly reached an agreement with the Venetians against

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849 "Prima a quello scriuete per lo retornar da voyuoda Vochossau e de Buday Tomas dala porta del imperador e chel signor dispot vi disse che ne douesti auisare come abiando lo dicto Vochossau concluso con li visieri per lo fatto nostro per la impetration del paese di Stiepan e siando li visiera ala presentia del imperator lo dicto imperator non volse asentir ma tolse inducio per tal fatto" (16. 6. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 95.

850 (23. 6. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 39v.

851 (3. 7. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 45v.

852 (4. 7. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 46. The Ragusans tried to make the stay of the sultan's and despot's envoys in their town as pleasant as possible. (10. 7. 1452) (11. 7. 1452) (12. 7. 1452) Ibid., 49, 50v, 52.

Ragusa's interests.[853] During August, the Ragusans learned that Vladislav planned to reconcile with his father. They wrote to Tomaš that Stjepan had promised the Ottomans to pay them 30,000 ducats in order to send their army to recapture the territories previously occupied by Vladislav. The situation that arose was not favorable to the Ragusans. The failure of Ottoman mediation and the inactivity of their allies put the Ragusan authorities in a position to seek reconciliation with Stjepan through Ivaniš Vlatković in August, but Kosača was not inclined to negotiate.[854]

The meeting between the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot in the autumn of 1452

Ragusan sources indicate that preparations for the meeting between King Tomaš and Despot Đurađ began as early as June 1452. In mid-July, the Senate decided to draft a letter to Aloisio Goze regarding their meeting. Goze was instructed to accompany the king to his meeting with the despot.[855] A few days later, the authorities instructed the permanent envoy at Duke Vladislav's to persuade him not to attend the meeting.[856] In August, the despot set off with his entourage, including Ragusan envoys from Smederevo to Bosnia. By the end of August, the despot and the Ragusans in his service were in the sub-town of Teočak. In the first half of September, the authorities responded to Gondola, Resti, and Georgio. According to the letter, the envoys were to engage in obtaining confirmation of previous charters from the despot, his wife, and sons, and to negotiate with Đurađ to recommend their merchants and the Republic of Ragusa in general to King Tomaš and other nobility present at the meeting. They sought to take

[853] (6. 8. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 64v, 65. "El dicto sclauo ne par inimigo del signor dispot e nostro e amicissimo del chercech" (7. 8. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 91.

[854] Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 280. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 126. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 186-187.

[855] "respondendi litteris domini Aluysi de Goze scribendo sibi quod sequitur regem si ibit ad colloquium cum domino despoto" (12. 7. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 51v.

[856] "scribendi ambassiatori nostro qui est ad dominum Vladissauum quod hortari debeat ipsum quod non vadat ad stanach" (19. 7. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 57v.

advantage of their good relations with the despot in order for him to negotiate the restitution of previously confiscated silver on their behalf from Tomaš. The despot was supposed to emphasize to Tomaš that the current trade embargo was detrimental not only to others, but also to him. At that time, the despot's *čelnik* and the envoy of Prince Vladislav were at the Porte, so the authorities tasked their subjects to inform them about the completion of that mission and the results of the meeting.[857] At this time, the Ragusans were not certain whether Vladislav would meet with the Serbian despot as well.[858] Most likely, the meeting between the king and the despot took place in October 1452. In an undated letter, presumably from October, the Ragusans responded to the letters of their nobles from Sasi near Srebrenica who informed them about the meeting and emphasized that the despot had refused to confirm the mentioned charters.[859] On this occasion, Đurađ did not influence King Tomaš regarding the restitution of Ragusa's silver, which was discussed in the following year.[860]

Two drafts from November were preserved, containing Ragusan instructions to the envoys at the despot, who was still on Bosnian territory at the end of October. In a letter from the *čelnik* Sorgo, who was in the village of Radalje near Zvonik, the authorities were informed about the possible annulment of the Hungarian-Ottoman peace, which alarmed the Ragusans who emphasized their desire to live and trade in peace with the Bosnians

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[857] "Apresso tegnerete modo cum quella honesta che ve parera del signor dispot faza una recommendation de li fati della nostra signoria a Re e a tuti quelli signori i quali serano al stanagh con quel modo che parera al prefato signor dispot metando esso signor dispot auanti li ochi de li prefati signori li beneficii li quali hano recevuto li signori passati … E simelmente ne auisarete de quello seguira pro l'andata de ser Pasqual ceonich ala Porta e del fatto del signor Vladissauo ala Porta e di ogni altra cossa la qual ve parera degne di auisarne" (12. 9. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 85.

[858] (7. 9. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 81v.

[859] "ser Jacomo Mar. de Gondola ambassador apresso del signor dispot dilecto citadino nostro salutem. Adi XXII de questo receuessemo do vostre lettere fatte in Sasi in nome vostro e de ser Aluise e ser Damian, l'una ale 8 l'altra ale 10 del detto, per le qual ne auisasti pontalmente de quello segui per lo stanagh et de ogni altra cossa ocorente" (October 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 10. (8. 10. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 93v.

[860] (2. 5. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 188.

and Ottomans. The despot's *čelnik* suggested to the Ragusan authorities that they finally send envoys to the sultan and thus regulate their status.[861] In another letter from the same day, the authorities expressed their satisfaction with the success of the despot's plans for Zvonik.[862] The presented content concludes the collection of data about the meeting between Tomaš and Đurađ. This gathering was undoubtedly motivated by multiple issues that the two neighbors needed to resolve. The mention of the despot's achievements regarding Zvonik indicates one dimension. Most likely, it involved Tomaš's confirmation of the despot's ownership of Zvonik, which was directly related to the provisions of the Hungarian-Ottoman peace of April 1452. One year later, Pope Nicholas V titled the despot with the phrase *totius Uxore domini*, although Đurađ's rule did not extend to the entire Usora at any moment.[863] At this meeting, Tomaš's involvement for the despot in Venice was also agreed upon. In December, the king's envoys were in front of the Venetian Senate, emphasizing that the king, in the meeting with the despot, arranged mediation with the aim of reconciliation between Đurađ and the Venetians.[864] The Senate expressed satisfaction with Tomaš's mediation. Although they proposed the arrival of their envoy in Bosnia,[865] sources do not indicate what further role the Bosnian king may have played in resolving the conflict. During the autumn of 1453, the Albanian nobleman Gjergj Kastrioti Skanderbeg emerged as a mediator in the negotiations between the Venetians and the Serbian despot.[866]

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[861] (22. 11. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 113-113v. (8. 11. 1452) (21. 11. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 109, 113.

[862] "lo signor dispot ha havuta la sua intention de Suonich se cossi e andarete ala presentia sua" (22. 11. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 113v.

[863] (8. 10. 1453) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 171. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 325. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 33. Momčilo Spremić, "Srbi i florentinska unija crkava 1439. godine", *ZRVI* XXIV-XXV, Beograd 1986, 419. Spremić, *Despot*, 480. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 320.

[864] (22. 12. 1452) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 456. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 272. About the conflict between Despot Đurađ and the Venetians in 1452, see: Spremić, *Despot*, 443-449.

[865] (23. 12. 1452) Valentini, *Acta Albaniae Veneta* III/XX, 260.

[866] (18. 9. 1453) Ljubić, *Listine* X, 17. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 376-377.

King Tomaš's and Despot Đurađ's stance towards the reconciliation of Herzog Stjepan and Ragusa

The conflict between Herzog Stjepan and the Ragusans took on new dimensions in the last months of 1452. In those days, all roads led to Edirne. Despite Despot Đurađ's active role as a mediator in 1452, his efforts did not significantly improve the position of the Ragusans and Duke Vladislav. In mid-October, the Ragusans sent a copy of Hunyadi's letter which was addressed to the sultan's court, to the despot, emphasizing that they did so because Đurađ was better informed than they were about the situation at the Porte.[867] At the same time, Stjepan negotiated military assistance from the Ottomans. Throughout November and December 1452, Ottoman forces stayed in Hum, fighting against Vladislav. Soon, Stjepan and his detachments entered the conflict, which caused Vladislav, who was ready to sign peace with his father at the beginning of 1453, to waver.[868] The Ragusans realized in February that peace was the only option left, and they urged Vladislav not to sign separate agreements.[869] The Ragusan authorities responded to a letter from the permanent envoys at Despot Đurađ's court, where they were informed that Đurađ Golemović, the despot's envoy, had left Smederevo for the Porte, along with the envoys of King Tomaš and Vladislav. They also mentioned that the despot had sent Aloisio Resti to the Bosnian king, but they were unaware of the reason for this visit. The authorities informed the despot that Stjepan had failed to capture Novi.[870]

[867] (17. 10. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 97v. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 526. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 526.

[868] Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 127. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 189-190. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 273. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 310. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 367.

[869] (10. 2. 1453) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 51-51v.

[870] "Hauemo inteso come ser Aluise de Resti e stato ala maiesta del Re de Bosna per parte del signor despot e sopra cio non hauemo havuto alcuno auiso da vuy sel detto sia venuto e perche casone. Et etiam hauemo inteso come vayuoda Vladsissau mando li sui ambassadori ala signor dispot per lo fato de quella parentela che vuy savete li quali ambassadori andorno poi ala Porta del Turcho. E de pui hauemo inteso conie lo signor despot mando Giurag Golemouich zelnich ala Porta. E simelmente chel Re mando da li soi ambasadori ala porta. E de quello sia seguito tanto per l' andar de li ambassadori de Vladissau ala Porta quanto de Giuragh Golemouich e de li ambassadori del Re

From this time onwards, the role of the Bosnian king and the despot was reduced to providing information and making efforts to engage them in peace negotiations. A papal legate arrived in Ragusa with the task of mediating between the warring parties. In March, the Ragusans wrote to Smederevo stating that Vladislav had arrived in the town. However, they instructed their envoys not to mention to the despot the papal legate's efforts for reconciliation until they learned about Đurađ's stance on the matter. They sought information from their subjects in Smederevo about the despot's envoys, who were acting on behalf of Vladislav at the sultan's court, as well as about the progress of Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations.[871] The change in the Hungarian throne at the beginning of 1453 further tightened Bosnia and the Despotate's attitude towards the Ottomans, as these states were included in the agreement from the previous year. Shortly thereafter, the authorities informed the despot about Stjepan's engagement with the new Hungarian ruler, Ladislaus, from whom he sought confirmation of all charters received from previous Hungarian kings.[872]

Diplomatic contacts continued during March regarding negotiations to reconcile all parties involved in the conflict. The negotiations progressed slowly as each side had specific conditions. The Ragusans sent a delegation to Herzog Stjepan, composed of their own envoys and those of Vladislav. According to their instructions, they were to insist on Stjepan to reconcile with the despot as a precondition for further peace negotiations.[873] In order to facilitate reconciliation, they sought out authorities who were at least partially outside of the conflict. As diplomatic activities further developed, in order to resolve the complex situation, Vladislav and his mother Jelena sought to involve King Tomaš and Despot Đurađ, with whom the herzog's

non hauemo alguna noticia …. Auisanoue como chercech ale XVIII de questo se leuo de campo da Noui castello de voyuoda Iuanis in Chelmo" (20. 2. 1453) Lett. di Lev. XV, 53.

[871] (6. 3. 1453) Lett. di Lev. XV, 49-49v, 50. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 531-533.

[872] Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 529. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 266.

[873] "E per che altre volte vuy signor cherzech recedesti la signoria nostra che la douesse mandar ambassador al signor despot tratar lo paxe tra esso e vuy" Lett. di Lev. XIV, 114v. (17. 3. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 166.

son had been communicating and maintaining cordial relations during the conflict. Through the Ragusan envoy, they proposed that the local authorities follow their example. The Ragusans designated Volco Babalio, who, together with Ivaniš Vlatković, would visit Tomaš and Đurađ and inform them that peace had not yet been achieved, but that they would ensure that no harm would be done to Bosnia and the Despotate during the peace process. They were to plead with them to accept Ragusa's intentions to establish peace and to influence Vladislav to expedite matters. To stimulate the two rulers, the Ragusan envoys were to mention that there was no one in Bosnia and the Despotate who would dare to oppose Stjepan, considering the fact that he had the Ottomans by his side.[874] It appears that this Ragusan effort ultimately yielded no results. In the following months, the Ragusan authorities once again sought to involve the king and the despot in their relations with Vladislav and Stjepan. In mid-June, a delegation was selected with the purpose of visiting Vladislav, Petar Vojsalić, Stjepan, King Tomaš, and Đurađ.[875] Nevertheless, there were delays and calculations once again. A few days later, instructions were prepared for Ragnina and Babalio, who were sent only to Vladislav. Since the sultan's envoy was present at his court, they were unable to visit Stjepan. Once again, they proposed presenting the issues to the king and despot and involving them in the negotiation process.[876] However, the Ragusan plans were not realized either. Early in

[874] "de mittendo ser Volcium nostrum ambasiatorem ad maiestatem regis Bosine et a dominum despotum" Below: "de faciendo tres qui ordinare et ordinatam et scriptam reportare debeant consilio rogatorum comissionem dandam ser Volcio de Babalio pro itu suo ad Regem et despotum" (24. 4. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 185v. "come esso signor Vladissauo e madona Helena erano pro mandar voyuoda Iuanis ali detti Re e despot per la raxone predicta esso Vladissauo e madona Helena confrontauano che anche nuy mandassemo nostro ambassatore a li deti Re e despot per quella madesima casone …per rispetto che non e alcuon signor in Bosna ne in Schiauonia el quale olsi a dauezar cherzech … [117v] … E se per caso el Re de Bosna cum lo signor despot ve domandarano in che nostro vole la signoria de Ragusa far questa paxe cum cherzech vuy risponderete: Signore anchora non e fata alcuna conclusione [118]" (26. 4. 1453) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 117v-118.

[875] (14. 6. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 204.

[876] "De pui pare a nuy che signor Vladisslau debia mandar li suoi ambasadori al signor cherzech auanti che luy vada al detto e pregarlo chel manda li suoi ambassatori al signor despot e simelmente chel Re manda la sua ambassata al deto signor despot" (20. 6. 1453) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 119v.

July, the Ragusans were informed that Vladislav had reconciled with Herzog Stjepan, which gave the negotiations a new direction.[877] The authorities promptly informed Tomaš and Đurađ about this event.[878]

In the aftermath of the reconciliation between father and son, the Ragusans had no choice but to work towards a reconciliation with Stjepan. In mid-July, they sent their delegation to the herzog, who, in addition to other factors surrounding their mutual reconciliation, emphasized to him the importance of reaching a peace agreement with King Tomaš and Despot Đurađ. According to Ragusan accounts, at that time, due to an epidemic that was spreading in Stjepan's territory in the Drina region, the local population was not allowed to cross over into the Despotate.[879] Further negotiations between Herzog Stjepan and the Republic, based on available indications, were conducted in a more intimate setting involving explicitly the participation of only the two conflicting parties. Finally, after nearly a year of negotiations, the final reconciliation took place in April 1454.[880] For the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot, interfering in this reconciliation was no longer at the top of the list of priorities, although until the end of 1453 they regularly received envoys from Ragusa, whose tasks have not been preserved in more detail.[881] In the second half of 1453, Tomaš and Đurađ's role in the Ragusan vision was mostly reduced to monitoring Ottoman-Hungarian relations.[882] By the end of May 1454, the Ragusans informed the Bosnian king, the Serbian despot, the Pope, and King Ladislaus of the peace achieved with Herzog Stjepan.[883]

[877] (5. 7. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 212. (7. 7. 1453) Lett. di Lev. XIV,121-121v.

[878] (6. 7. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 211.

[879] "Ma se li detti mercadanti sorsi non vignerano al presente per lo paese de Drina non prenda cherzech admiratione perche non restarano de vignir pro altro saluo perche hano inteso che in molti luogi e mal sano et hano inteso essi mercadanti in Schiauonia de passando lor per li detti luogi mal sani non serano poi lassati intrar in paese del signor despoti" (18. 7. 1453) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 122v.

[880] Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 128-129. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 201-212.

[881] (11. 7. 1453) (18. 7. 1453) (18. 8. 1453) (25. 8. 1453) (29. 8. 1453) (3. 9. 1453) (8. 9. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 214, 215v, 228v, 231, 232v, 233v, 235v.

[882] (11. 8. 1453) (6. 10. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 223v, 245v. (6. 10. 1453) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 590.

[883] "de faciendo tres qui ordinare et ordinatas reportare debeant consilio rogatorum litteras scribendas

By conquering Constantinople in May 1453, Mehmed II signaled the direction of his expansionist activities, causing fear among all rulers in this part of Europe.[884] Especially Đurađ had reasons to worry, as he learned through the Genoese in June 1453 that the sultan was planning an attack on parts of his territory.[885] Therefore, it is not surprising that the reconciliation between Stjepan and Đurađ took place, most likely during the autumn of 1453. The Venetian Senate had information in mid-November that a wedding was being planned between these two families.[886] It involved prolonged negotiations regarding the marriage of Vladislav and Irene's cousin, Anna Kantakouzene, which Vladislav had initiated in February 1453.[887] Essentially, the Kosačas and the Brankovićs sought to strengthen their relationship through a practice common in European feudal courts. This marriage, however, did not take place until the end of 1455.

The conflict between Stjepan Vukčić and the Ragusans dragged almost identical political representatives from the Bosnian neighborhood into a whirlwind of conflict, similar to the Konavle War two decades earlier. Ragusa's strong diplomatic activity in 1451 and 1452 led to the formation of new alliances among the political factions in Bosnia and the Despotate. The role of the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot during this conflict can be characterized by two phases. The appearance of the two rulers in this

Summo pontifici, serenissimo domino regi Ladislauo domino nostro et aliis dominis Hungarie et domino regi Aragonum et dominationem Venetiarum et domino despoto et regi Bosne" (27. 5. 1454) Cons. Rog. XIV, 64. The letters for Tomaš and Đurađ were sent at the beginning of June. (1. 6. 1454) Ibid., 64v.

[884] Steven Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople 1453*, Cambridge at the University Press, 1965, 73-159. Babinger, *Mehmed Osvajač*, 80-84. Ostrogorski, *Istorija Vizantije*, 527-528

[885] Spremić, *Despot*, 474.

[886] (15. 11. 1453) Ljubić, *Listine* X, 22. Isailović, "Bračni planovi", 206.

[887] "Et etiam hauemo inteso come vayuoda Vladissau mando li sui ambasadori al signor despot per lo fato de quella parentela che vuy sauete li quali ambassadori andorno poi ala porta del Turcho" (20. 2. 1453) Lett. di Lev. XV, 53. "Et considerando le affinitate e parentele le qual sono fatte ab antiquo et nouamente tra la caxa vostra e lo signor despot e tra vuy e lo Re de Bosna et che pur li detti hano participato in questa guerra como se sa debita cossa e che etiamdio tra vuy e li detti signori se faza bona paxe como era per lo passato." (20. 6. 1453) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 120. Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 242.

war was accompanied by their joint alliance with the Republic during the ongoing plan to purchase Stjepan's territories. However, due to a change in Ragusa's course, the roles of Tomaš and Đurađ, who seemed disinterested, were reduced to being observers in the final phase of this crisis. During the events which marked the beginning of the 1450s, much more significant processes were taking place, as evidenced by the Ottoman conquest of the Byzantine capital. The feudal elite from the southeastern European region became aware that all conflicts between rulers and nobles in these territories had a predetermined winner, Sultan Mehmed II. The time came when the relations between Bosnia and the Despotate could no longer unfold outside the framework of Ottoman expansionist activities.

IV

AT THE END OF AN ERA: UNDER THE SHADOW OF OTTOMAN SUPREMACY (1454-1459)

IV
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By capturing the Byzantine capital in May 1453, the Ottoman Empire, led by the young and ambitious Sultan Mehmed II, solidified its presence on European soil and secured positions for further advancement. The direction of Ottoman expansion led through the South Slavic territories towards Hungary and other states in Central Europe. Thus, Bosnia and the Despotate, as the strongest states in this region from a European perspective, emerged as the last line of defense against the onslaught of the Ottoman tide. However, these were states that had already been penetrated by Ottoman influence in the early decades of the 15th century, and each subsequent opportunity from the Ottoman side was used to further establish the already built positions. Facing the Ottoman presence in their own backyard, bolstered by empty European rhetoric, the Bosnian king and Serbian despot, by examining the conquest of Constantinople, could clearly foresee the (in)secure future without the aid of medieval seers.

Echoes of Ottoman Attacks on the Despotate in Bosnia (1454-1457)

In 1453, the political forces of Bosnia and the Despotate were not directed towards securing an adequate defense against the looming threat from the Ottomans. While Despot Đurađ continued to follow the Ottoman course and serve as a tool for realizing the sultan's ambitions, Bosnian forces were oriented towards resolving the conflict between Herzog Stjepan and Ragusa, as well as the struggles for the inheritance of Ban Petar Talovac.[888] According to contemporary accounts, the Serbian army and miners actively participated in the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, thus assisting in the realization of Ottoman goals.[889] The Serbian despot still hoped for a favorable status at the Porte, but by July 1453, it was known that an ultimatum had been sent to Smederevo demanding the surrender of parts of the Despotate, leading to Đurađ's reorientation towards European rulers. Mehmed II found a pretext for the attack in his own interpretation of the historical context, claiming that the Despotate did not belong to Đurađ but to Stefan Lazarević, and that Branković had rights only to familial inheritance. The diplomatic framework that King Tomaš had been advocating in recent years, which had brought him some benefits, did not prove advantageous for Đurađ. After the failure of Hungarian-Serbian diplomacy at the Porte in early 1454, Mehmed II decided to attack the Despotate during the summer, leaving the aging despot with no choice but to retreat to Hungary with his entourage following a similar pattern as in 1439.[890]

[888] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 310.

[889] Sfrances, *Hronika*, 158, 161. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 128.

[890] Dušanka Dinić-Knežević, "Srpska despotovina prema Turcima od pada Carigrada do opsade Beograda (1453-1456)", *Godišnjak* 6, Novi Sad 1961, 129-131. Babinger, *Mehmed Osvajač*, 93-94. Spremić, "Srbi i florentinska unija", 419. Spremić, *Despot*, 477-480, 491, 494.

While the Ottoman army plundered the poorly defended territory of the Despotate, captured Ostružnica near Rudnik, and began the siege of Smederevo, the Serbian despot was in Hungary, seeking military support from Hunyadi.[891] There was considerable interest in Bosnia regarding the turbulent events taking place in the neighboring region. The Ragusan envoy at Herzog Stjepan's, Marin Gondola, reported to his authorities in mid-September from Foča about the return of Despot Đurađ and his family across the Danube to Smederevo. Hungarian military units were also moving towards the Despotate from Hungary, and Herzog Stjepan expected them to soon clash with the Ottoman forces that were still in the Despotate. According to the information available to Gondola, the sultan had already withdrawn to Sofia.[892] Bosnian predictions turned out to be accurate. In October, news arrived in Srebrenica about the events in the Despotate. Despot Đurađ informed the duke of Srebrenica, Brajan, about their recent victory over the Ottomans at the end of September near Kruševac, achieved by united forces under Hunyadi's command. On this occasion, the Ottoman army suffered heavy losses, and their commanders were punished with severe death.[893] Many European courts discussed forming a coalition against the Ottomans during the summer of 1454. More distant states, however, believed that the Ottoman army was unable to reach their territory. The activities of Emperor Frederick III and Pope Nicholas V, who promised to initiate war and grant indulgences, did not receive an adequate response.[894] Herzog Stjepan also feared the Ottoman attacks on the Despotate, worrying about his own possessions. In June, he committed to paying King Alfonso 5,000 ducats annually if the king relieved him of his obligations to the sultan.[895] Concurrently, King Alfonso sent his envoys to Bosnia and the Despotate. The Neapolitan envoy stayed with Herzog Stjepan,

[891] Miloš Antonović, "Nikola Kuzanski i pripreme za borbu protiv Turaka 1454. godine", *IG* 1-2, Beograd 1987, 97. Spremić, *Despot*, 490-493.

[892] (13. 9. 1454) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 186-187.

[893] (10. 10. 1454) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 187-188. Compare: Rački, "Prilozi", 152-153. Spremić, *Despot*, 494-495.

[894] Babinger, *Mehmed Osvajač*, 103.

[895] Ćorović, *Historija*, 51. Spremić, "Balkanski vazali", 358.

King Tomaš, and Despot Đurađ to emphasize Alfonso's desire to wage war against the Ottomans.[896] However, the Kingdom of Naples had limited capabilities to carry out such an endeavor. Based on the decisions of the Ragusan Senate, there was correspondence with Tomaš and Đurađ during June and July 1454 regarding a common matter, but the sparse information does not provide detailed insight into the purpose of this correspondence.[897]

In the mid-1450s, Balkan states sought to secure a better position at the Porte in order to ensure their survival. This principle is clearly illustrated by Ragusan diplomatic moves in late 1454. The news reached Ragusa that both sides had initiated peace negotiations after the Ottoman army was defeated by Hungarian forces. The Ragusan authorities sought to take advantage of the situation to address economic issues in Bosnia, where restricted trade automatically caused trade disruptions with the Despotate. In early November 1454, Jacobo Bona was sent from Ragusa with instructions to assess the current situation regarding peace with the Ottomans from Despot Đurađ and Hunyadi, who were believed to be at the same location at that time. Following a previously tested pattern, Bona was to request the despot and Hunyadi to negotiate with the Porte for the dispatch of the sultan's envoy to Bosnia. This envoy would then ask King Tomaš and the nobility to adhere to the provisions of the charters they had with the Ragusans.[898] Bona's mission did not achieve significant success, as the despot's and Hungarian delegation had already left for the Ottoman capital. However, the Ragusan managed to secure the delivery of Hunyadi's letter to Herzog Stjepan, which had no impact on the situation.[899]

The diplomatic efforts undertaken by Hunyadi and Đurađ in 1454 with the aim of achieving peace with Sultan Mehmed II did not yield results.

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[896] Spremić, "Despot Đurađ Branković i kralj Alfons Aragonski", 383.

[897] (1. 6. 1454) (20. 6. 1454) (10. 7. 1454) (19. 7. 1454) Cons. Rog. XIV, 64v, 68, 72, 73.

[898] (2. 11. 1454) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 563-564. Dinić-Knežević, "Srpska despotovina prema Turcima", 133. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 135. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 214. Nilević, "Učešće", 63. Nilević, "Posljednji Pavlovići", 30.

[899] Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 135-136.

After failed diplomacy, Hunyadi informed the Ragusans at the end of the year about his plans to launch a military campaign against the Ottomans.[900] However, the Ottomans did not waste any time either. They launched a new attack against the Despotate in early 1455. Late in March, the Ragusan authorities reported to Buda that Ottoman forces were on the despot's territory.[901] The strong Ottoman pressure on the Despotate left a lasting impression in Bosnia, where King Tomaš and his nobility increasingly turned to diplomacy with European courts. The most prominent advocate of the anti-Ottoman campaign was King Alfonso, with whom Bosnian magnates traditionally maintained good relations. Maintaining their ties with the Neapolitan king at the level of diplomatic correspondence, King Tomaš and Herzog Stjepan in the spring of 1455 tried to coordinate their actions according to European plans.[902] Western rulers were slow at forming a coalition. It was at this time that the envoys of the Hungarian king and the Serbian despot arrived at the Bosnian court. The brief remarks of the Ragusan authorities to the envoy at King Tomaš do not shed light on the details of this diplomatic mission, but it certainly related to discussions about the current political situation dominated by the Ottomans.[903] A large number of Ottomans were present in the Despotate by the summer of 1455. The main objective of this campaign was to conquer Novo Brdo, one of the largest mining centers in this part of Europe. After capturing the surrounding territories, strong Ottoman attacks on Novo Brdo followed in the former Branković's region, and by early June 1455, this mining center fell into the hands of the Ottomans.[904] The despot, upon receiving news of the Ottoman army's movements, took refuge on Hungarian territory in 1455, after losing

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900 (13. 1. 1455) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 569-570.

901 (23. 3. 1455) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 577-578.

902 Thallóczy, *Studien*, 402-404.

903 (30. 4. 1455) Lett. di Lev. XVI, 213.

904 Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 380. Dinić, "Novo Brdo", 247. Momčilo Spremić-Jovanka Kalić, "Sultan Mehmed II Osvajač i Srbija", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 297.

this important mining center.[905] The news of the fall of Novo Brdo in mid-June caused fear in Ragusa, and the authorities turned to Hunyadi, who hesitated to mobilize his army due to the complex situation in Hungary.[906] The Ottoman presence in the Despotate had an impact on neighboring regions. Early in November, the Ragusans were informed that Ottoman forces were preparing to attack Bosnia and Ragusa. In a report sent to Rome, they highlighted that Christian rulers were carefree and uninterested. They mentioned that the despot's state had suffered a collapse, even though his towns were considered unconquerable. They also mentioned that Bosnian magnates, who harbored hostile feelings towards Ragusa, were attempting to instigate the Ottomans against the Republic.[907] The extent to which King Tomaš and the nobles prepared for a potential Ottoman attack during autumn is unknown. However, their letters to King Alfonso several months earlier indicate that they were aware of the possibility of Ottoman forces invading from the Despotate. The attack from the Despotate and the crossing of the Ottoman army over the border into Bosnian territories did not occur due to the Ottomans' preoccupation with the campaigns undertaken by Hunyadi at the end of the year.[908]

Following the Ottoman conquest of southern parts of the Despotate in the summer of 1455, Đurađ managed to sign a peace treaty with Sultan Mehmed II, thus providing a much-needed respite to his state and subjects. In accordance with the terms of the peace treaty, the territory of the Despotate was significantly reduced. Đurađ retained control over the region north of Kruševac and the Western Morava, as well as the burden of annual tribute, albeit in a slightly smaller amount than in previous years.[909] Following the events of 1455, the Ottomans incorporated some previously conquered parts

[905] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 381. Spremić, *Despot*, 529.

[906] (11. 6. 1455) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 580-581.

[907] (2. 11. 1455) Lett. di Lev. XVI, 174.

[908] (20. 11. 1455) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 585-586. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 140-141.

[909] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 382. Spremić-Kalić, "Sultan Mehmed II Osvajač i Srbija", 299. Spremić, *Despot*, 539.

of Bosnia and the Despotate into the same administrative unit. According to the census by Isa-bey Ishaković, the integral part of this administrative region consisted of the vilayets of Zvečan, Jeleč, Sjenica, Ras, and Hodidjed.[910] The less turbulent times in the autumn of 1455 were used for the realization of the wedding between Anna Kantakouzene and Vladislav Kosača. According to the Ragusan authorities, preparations for this wedding, as well as for the wedding of Herzog Stjepan and his second son Vlatko, were conducted from March to May 1455.[911] Herzog Stjepan informed King Alfonso about the wedding arrangements.[912] Despite their efforts, the marriage between Vladislav and Anna did not take place at that time but rather later in October of the same year.[913] The new daughter-in-law at the Kosača court was the daughter of George Palaiologos Kantakouzenos and a relative of the despot's wife, Irene.[914] This marriage aimed to further strengthen the relationship between the Branković and Kosača families, especially considering the context of the time when unstable neighborly relations prevailed.

King Tomaš and the Bosnian nobility during the Ottoman attacks on the Despotate in 1455 did not appear in the role of Ottoman vassals obliged to provide military troops for the sultan's campaigns. According to Stjepan's statement, which was most likely conveyed in an exaggerated form at the end of April 1455 by the Ragusans to the Hungarian court, that Kosača was not obliged to assist the sultan until the Ottoman army reached Buda,

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910 Hazim Šabanović, *Krajište Isa bega Ishakovića-Zbirni katastarski popis iz 1455. godine*, Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu, Sarajevo, 1964, 3, 14.

911 (7. 3. 1455) (10. 3. 1455) (11. 3. 1455) (1. 4. 1455) (26. 4. 1455) (2. 5. 1455) (6. 5. 1455) Cons. Rog. XIV, 138, 139, 140, 140-141, 148, 157-158, 160. (15. 4. 1455) (16. 4. 1455) Cons. Maius X, 171v, 172, 173. (15. 4. 1455) (19. 4. 1455) (2. 5. 1455) (5. 5. 1455) Cons. Minus XIV, 7, 8v, 11v, 12. In more detail in: Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 243-245.

912 (5. 4. 1455) Thallóczy, *Studien*, 404.

913 (6. 9. 1455) (28. 9. 1455) (25. 10. 1455) Cons. Rog. XIV, 202v, 203, 213v, 222v. (9. 9. 1455) Cons. Maius X, 203, 203v. (9. 9. 1455) (20. 9. 1455) (26. 9. 1455) Cons. Minus XIV, 45, 47, 48v. Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 245-246.

914 Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 372. Ferjančić, "Vizantinci u Srbiji", 197. Radivoj Radić, "Od Evdokije Anđeo do Ane Kantakuzine", in: *Kosače-Osnivači Hercegovine*, 510.

nor King Ladislaus unless the Hungarian army reached Edirne.[915] Stjepan's boasting did not last long. In early 1456, the sultan's request for military forces arrived in Bosnia due to Ottoman plans to attack Smederevo and Belgrade. Tomaš informed Ban od Mačva, János Kórógyi, through an envoy that Mehmed II had sent an ultimatum to Herzog Stjepan to provide 8,000 soldiers. He requested 6,000 from the Pavlovićs and the king himself was supposed to provide 10,000 soldiers with personal participation. Ban of Mačva forwarded Tomaš's message to Hunyadi at the beginning of February, and Despot Đurađ was also informed of these events. Bosnian king and nobility agreed to continue paying the customary tribute, but declined to send military forces under the fortresses of Smederevo and Belgrade.[916] The Ragusans were aware of the gathering of the Ottoman army as early as mid-January; in March, they received information that Ottoman forces with siege weapons had arrived in Skopje; and in April, they reported on the Ottoman army on the Danube.[917] According to chronicler Resti, due to the arrival of the Ottoman army near Smederevo, the Ragusans feared that an attack on Bosnia and Ragusa could soon follow.[918] According to the drafts of the decisions of the Senate, it appears that the Ragusans had planned to deliver the news they had previously received from the Serbian despot to the Bosnian king, but then decided not to.[919] Lacking fresh information from the Despotate, the Ragusan authorities made a decision in mid-May

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915 (24. 4. 1455) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 579. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 137. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 220. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 377.

916 "Imperator vero per se cum totis suis viribus se ad iter preestruxisset (?) ut in futuro mense castra Zenderw et Nadorablense castrametaret et obsideret. Requirit etiam idem imperator Turcorum oprefatum regem Bozne et Sthepan Herczegh ac Petrum wayvodam filium Radozlafy wayuode et mandat eisdem, ut prefatus rex decem milia hominum et Sthepan Herczegh octo milia, ipse vero Petrus wayuoda quatuor milia hominum cum frugibus ponderosos in auxilium imperatoris darent et amministrarent." (8. 2. 1456) Komáromy András, *Magyar Történelmi tár*, Uj folyam II, A Magyar történelmi társulat tulajdona, Budapest, 1901, 193. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 228. Kalić-Mijušković, *Beograd u srednjem veku*, 134.

917 (13. 1. 1456) (12. 3. 1456) (15. 4. 1456) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 586-590, 591-592.

918 Restius, *Chronica*, 351.

919 (24. 4. 1456) Cons. Rog. XIV, 291v.

to send one of its envoys to Smederevo and other places to gather information.[920] Refusing to submit to the sultan's demand, King Tomaš sought to strengthen his ties with the anti-Ottoman movement led by John of Capistrano and János Hunyadi in Hungary. In early May, a Bosnian delegation set off from Jajce with letters of unknown content for John of Capistrano.[921] Despot Đurađ, who was present in the southern parts of Hungary at that time and an integral part of the anti-Ottoman movement, was certainly informed about the neighboring rulers' stance towards the Ottomans.[922] At the end of May, Tomaš announced through a papal envoy that he was ready to act according to the plans from Rome.[923]

As early as June 1456, Ottoman forces attempted to seize Smederevo, but were unsuccessful.[924] Despite the fact that the Ottoman army did not cross the Bosnian borders this time either, Tomaš's position was far from easy. While the majority of the Ottoman army was still within the despot's territory, the Bosnian king informed the Venetians at the beginning of June that he had received the sultan's request to send 10,000 loads of grain to feed the Ottoman forces in the Despotate. Tomaš sought assistance from the Venetian authorities due to the fact that Mehmed II also demanded the surrender of four Bosnian towns from him. The Venetians themselves did not know how to respond to the king, but they allowed him to come to their territory in case of emergency and facilitated the transfer of his valuable possessions from Bosnia to Venice.[925] King Tomaš's position improved towards the end of the summer of 1456 when, after the unsuccessful siege of Belgrade, the Ottoman army suffered a defeat at the hands of the Christian coalition led by John of Capistrano and Hunyadi. These events

[920] "mittendo corerios Smedreum et ad alia loca ubi ipsis videbiter pro speculando de nouis" (22. 5. 1456) Cons. Rog. XV, 8.

[921] (3. 5. 1456) Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, 227-228.

[922] (23. 10. 1455) (13. 2. 1456) Cons. Rog. XIV, 221, 258v. (24. 10. 1455) Cons. Minus XIV, 54.

[923] (31. 5. 1456) Thallóczy, *Studien*, 415-416. On the dating of the letter, see: Ćirković, *Herceg*, 229.

[924] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 388. Dinić-Knežević, "Srpska despotovina prema Turcima", 137-138. Spremić, *Despot*, 560-561.

[925] (3. 6. 1456) (14. 6. 1456) Ljubić, *Listine* X, 86-90. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 287-288.

also improved the despot's position, and he returned to Smederevo with his family in September.[926]

The victory of the Hungarian army, aided by Capistrano's supporters, brought a new respite from the Ottomans to Bosnia and the Despotate at the end of 1456. By excluding himself from the list of military forces present within the walls of Smederevo and Belgrade, King Tomaš provoked the sultan, who threatened revenge. Tailoring the foreign policy according to the Ottoman measures could not significantly prolong the survival of Balkan states. In recent years, the Bosnian king was able to observe the illustrative principle of this rule, as demonstrated by the Despotate. During the autumn of 1456, Tomaš and Đurađ were characterized as fighters against the Ottomans in a letter from the Hungarian vice-chancellor Stephen addressed to the Szabolcs count, Nicola.[927] The situation in Hungary was not conducive to future preparations for battles. Shortly after the defense of Belgrade, Janos Hunyadi died, followed by John of Capistrano.[928] Moreover, conflicts arose between Hunyadi's successors and King Ladislaus in Hungary.[929] During November, a delegation from the Despotate made unsuccessful attempts to negotiate peace at the Porte. Soon after the diplomatic failure in December 1456, Despot Đurađ Branković died at a very old age.[930]

Immediately after Đurađ's death, his son Despot Lazar (1457-1458) assumed control over the Despotate.[931] At the end of January, Lazar's envoys

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926 Sfrances, *Hronika*, 169. Babinger, *Mehmed Osvajač*, 117-122. Spremić, *Despot*, 570. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 295-296. Stanko Andrić, "Saint John Capistran and Despot George Branković: An Impossible Compromise", *Byzantinoslavica* 74, 2016, 225-226. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 378. The news of Hunyadi's victory was known in Venice in mid-August. (12. 8. 1456) Ljubić, *Listine* X, 94-95.

927 "Item despotus et rex Bosne facient eorum debita contra Turcos et omnes nos faciemus omnia, que poterimus pro fide Christi." (4. 11. 1456) Imre Nagy, *Codex diplomaticus domus senioris comitum Zichy de Zich et Vásonkeö*, 12, Pest 1931, 249. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 327.

928 Sfrances, *Hronika*, 169. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 206. Andrić, "Saint John Capistran", 226.

929 Ćorović, *Historija*, 521.

930 Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 384. Spremić, *Despot*, 571-578.

931 In mid-January 1457, the Ragusans discussed sending a letter to Despot Lazar on the occasion of the death of his father Đurađ. (15. 1. 1457) Cons. Rog. XV, 85.

arrived in Buda with news that the new despot had managed to negotiate peace with the Ottomans, retaining the territory ruled by his father while paying a high annual tribute, despite the fact that the Ottomans did not return Novo Brdo to him. According to a letter from the Venetian secretary Peter Tomasis, the despot's delegation had information about Ottoman pressure on Bosnia, where the sultan had sent many craftsmen to build ships on the Sava River, and 8,000 guards were dispatched to ensure the security of these Ottoman craftsmen.[932] The presence of Ottoman forces in Bosnia was also known to the Ragusans who wrote to the Hungarians about "significant events" at the end of January, and at the beginning of February, they issued one of many bans on trading textiles and other goods through Bosnia.[933] By April, Tomasis learned through a new delegation from Smederevo that the sultan was preparing an army against the Despotate, that Ottoman forces had already arrived in Bosnia and neighboring states, and that the arrival of new forces was expected. The Bosnian king had begun diplomatic efforts towards Western states in the spring of 1457. By March, his envoys stayed in Rome, seeking a crusader flag for the war against the Ottomans. A month later, Tomaš addressed the Hungarian king and the papal legate Carvajal, emphasizing that the sultan had once again demanded the surrender of fortresses from him. The Bosnian ruler was determined to stop obeying the sultan's orders.[934] For this purpose, during the summer of 1457,

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[932] (3. 2. 1457) Macuscev, *Monumenta* II, 215-216. Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 223-224. Momčilo Spremić, "Propast srednjovekovne države", in: *Istorija srpskog naroda: Doba borbi za očuvanje i obnovu države (1371-1537)*, 303. Stanko Andrić, "Rijeka Sava kao protuturski bedem (do pada Bosne)", in: *Zbornik radova znanstvenog skupa održanog u Slavonskom Brodu 18-19. listopada 2013*, Hrvatski institut za povijest-Podružnica za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje, Slavonski Brod 2015, 222-223.

[933] (29. 1. 1457) (3. 2. 1457) Cons. Rog. XV, 90, 93v. On the same day, the Ragusans addressed Isa-bey about these problems. Branislav Nedeljković, "Dubrovačko-turski ugovor od 23. oktobra 1458. godine", *ZFFB* XI/1, Beograd 1970, 367.

[934] (7. 4. 1457) Macuscev, *Monumenta historica* II, 216-217. Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, 229. Nicolai Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir al historie des croisades au XVe siecle* IV, Bucarest 1915, 157-158. Emir O. Filipović, "*Exurge igitur, miles Christi, et in barbaros viriliter pugna…* The Anti-Ottoman Activities of Bosnian King Stjepan Tomaš (1443-1461)", in: *Holy War in Late Medieval and Early Modern East-Central Europe*, Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie, Krakow 2017, 231.

he made an effort to strengthen ties with a potential Christian coalition that would serve as a counterbalance to Ottoman power. In June, the papal legate Carvajal stayed in Bosnia, assessing Tomaš's willingness and strength to confront the Ottomans, with the task of providing advice for the success of this campaign.[935] The following month, the Bosnian king sent Nikola Testa to the courts of European rulers and nobility, aiming to present the difficult situation in his Kingdom and encourage European powers to undertake a joint effort against the Ottomans. Tomaš received moral support from Pope Callixtus III (1455-1458), who, through his envoy Jacob de Marchia, called upon the rulers of Bosnia, Hungary, Wallachia, and Poland to send envoys to Rome for negotiations regarding the campaign.[936] Despot Lazar, who had reached an agreement with Sultan Mehmed II earlier in the year, was not among those invited for discussions on the Christian campaign. However, for the upcoming battle, in which King Tomaš was supposed to lead, the Curia also counted on support from the Despotate. For this purpose, the Pope authorized the Franciscan Mariano de Siena to preach crusades in Hungary, Bosnia, and the Despotate, and to deliver the collected money to Tomaš.[937] There was a great deal of uncertainty during those months in Bosnia. The Ragusans had been restricting the movement of their subjects to Bosnia and the Despotate throughout 1457.[938]

While the Bosnian envoys were visiting the courts of European rulers, visibly uninterested in going to the battlefield, a division occurred in the house of the Brankovićs in the Despotate, resulting in polarization between Despot Lazar and his mother Irene. With Đurađ's widow were his daughter Mara and son Grgur. After Irene's death in May 1457, the two of them found refuge with Sultan Mehmed II, while Lazar's brother Stefan remained in the

[935] Vilim Fraknoi, "Kardinal Carvajal u Bosni 1457.", *GZM* II/1, Sarajevo 1890, 9-10. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 539. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 314. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 290. Filipović, "The Anti-Ottoman Activities of Bosnian King Stjepan Tomaš", 232.

[936] (25. 10. 1457) Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, 233-234.

[937] Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 540. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 290. Filipović, "The Anti-Ottoman Activities of Bosnian King Stjepan Tomaš", 234.

[938] (7. 7. 1457) (29. 7. 1457) (12. 9. 1457) (19. 11. 1457) Cons. Rog. XV, 149v, 157v, 167, 193v.

state with him.[939] Despite the signed peace, Lazar's position was far from easy. His territory was significantly reduced, and the reports of his envoys reveal a constant fear of a new Ottoman attack. He was forced to fight under the Ottoman flag in Hungary.[940] In the absence of sources of income, Lazar turned to withdrawing from the deposit his father had left in Ragusa in the autumn and winter of 1457.[941] At the same time, Grgur and Mara Branković were withdrawing money from Đurađ's deposit too, following Herzog Stjepan's advice.[942] Ragusan authorities learned from a monk in their service that the sultan had ordered Isa-bey and Bosnian magnates to attack Ragusa.[943] A few days later, envoys were sent from Ragusa to Isa-bey with instructions to inform the subjects of the Republic on Bosnian territory to withdraw to Ragusa.[944] As a result of Ottoman threats during 1457, Bosnia and the Despotate were compelled to adopt a specific form of foreign policy towards Ragusa, resulting in a narrower range of activities involving the rulers of these two states.[945] Bosnian hopes for a potential Christian alliance were further diminished by the new change on the Hungarian throne when Matthias Corvinus (1458-1490) came to power after Ladislaus's death in early 1458.[946]

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[939] Spremić, *Despot*, 591-592. Dušan Korać-Radivoj Radić, "Mehmed II, the Conqueror, in: Byzantine Short Chronicles and Old Serbian Annals, Inscriptions and Genealogies", *ZRVI* XLV, Beograd 2008, 296. Momčilo Spremić, "Despot Lazar Branković", *ZRVI* L, Beograd 2013, 905. Popović, *Mara Branković*, 140-142.

[940] Spremić, *Despot*, 594.

[941] (12. 9. 1457) (12. 11. 1457) (26. 11. 1457) (28. 11. 1457) Cons. Rog. XV, 168, 191, 198, 199. (23. 11. 1457) Cons. Minus XIV, 177v. Truhelka, "Tursko-slovjenski spomenici", 453. Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 156–159. (23. 11. 1457) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 606. Nebojša Porčić, "Dokumenti Lazara i Stefana Brankovića o podizanju poklada despota Đurđa", *Inicijal* 2, Beograd 2014, 216.

[942] Restius, *Chronica*, 348. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 236.

[943] (14. 11. 1457) Lett. di Lev. XVI, 115. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 600-602. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 541. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 149.

[944] (28. 11. 1457) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 179.

[945] Cons. Rog. XV, 100, 113v, 139, 142v, 167, 176, 179.

[946] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 297-298.

The Despotate at the epicenter of Bosnian political plans in 1458

At the beginning of 1458, Despot Lazar suddenly died, leaving no male heir behind. Temporary control over the Despotate was assumed by Lazar's widow Helena, his brother Stefan, and the *čelnik* Mihailo Anđelović, brother of the Rumelian beylerbey Mahmud Pasha.[947] In mid-February, Venetian subjects from Zadar reported that the Despotate was threatened by an Ottoman army of 5,000 soldiers expected to invade the Despotate from Bosnia.[948] According to contemporary accounts, the sultan ordered the beylerbey to conquer the Despotate peacefully.[949] Bosnian King Stjepan Tomaš also took advantage of Lazar's death by reclaiming the regions along the Drina River and incorporating them back into the Bosnian state. According to reports from Venetian subjects in Split, by mid-February at the latest, Tomaš had occupied Srebrenica and some other fortresses in the vicinity. He assigned the occupied places to his nobles Tvrtko Stančić and Tvrtko Kovačević, while he retained Srebrenica and two other fortified towns for himself. At the same time, King Matthias tasked the Hungarian governor Michael Szilágyi with overseeing the changes taking place in the Despotate.[950] It is not known which fortresses besides Srebrenica were seized by King Tomaš. It is certain, however, that not all possessions up to the Drina River fell under the Bosnian crown on this occasion, as the charter from October 1458 states that after Lazar's death, Helena and Stefan Branković donated a possession in Usora to the logothete Ratković.[951]

[947] Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 242. Ferjančić, "Vizantinci u Srbiji", 209. Spremić, "Propast srednjovjekovne države", 306. Spremić, "Despot Stefan Branković slepi", 125.

[948] (22. 2. 1458) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai emlekek* I, 6.

[949] Sfrances, *Hronika*, 171. Radivoj Radić, "Četiri zanemarena podatka o srednjovekovnoj Bosni", in: *Spomenica Milana Vasića*, ANURS, Banja Luka 2005, 161.

[950] (22. 2. 1458) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai*, 6. Macuscev, *Monumenta historica* II, 204-205.

[951] (14. 10. 1458) Rački, "Prilozi", 157.

Immediately after Lazar's death, the Hungarians attempted to secure control over the Despotate through the papal legate Carvajal, but all the Curia managed to do was issue a bull by Callixtus III in mid-March 1458, in which the Despotate was taken under papal protection.[952]

In Smederevo, at the beginning of 1458, a confusing situation prevailed that did not contribute to securing a better position in the face of the new Ottoman threat. The appointed regency had differing views on resolving the situation. Lazar's widow, aware of the Ottoman danger, sought to negotiate the exchange of part of her state for possessions in Hungary. However, such an outcome did not suit Anđelović, who had support from his brother Mahmud Pasha.[953] Anđelović managed to secure the main say in Smederevo and thus the Ottoman course prevailed. The Ragusans were aware of this and approached Anđelović regarding trade issues, referring to him as the governor of Serbia.[954] In a report from Buda, the Venetians considered Anđelović the despot of Serbia.[955] By mid-April, it was known in Bosnia that Anđelović had entered Smederevo with an Ottoman detachment and was attempting to declare the state an Ottoman possession, which led to conflicts and his capture. In those days, however, the Ottoman army was conquering parts of the Despotate, and it was expected that the entire state would fall under their control. With the Ottoman army came Vuk, the illegitimate son of Lazar's brother Grgur Branković, whom the Ottomans sought to place in power. By April at the latest, the Bosnian king reached another agreement with the Ottomans, agreeing to pay tribute and reconciling with Herzog Stjepan. Due to the strong Ottoman influence in the Despotate, skepticism was expressed in the report from Bistrica regarding the potential marriage between the son of the Bosnian king and the daughter of Despot Lazar, implying that even amid numerous interested neighbors vying for power

[952] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 386. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 328.

[953] Radonić, "Sporazum u Tati", 222-223. Babinger, *Mehmed Osvajač*, 133-134. Spremić, *Despot*, 612-613.

[954] "scribendi nobilibus et mercatoribus nostris in Srebrenize et in Smedreuo et Michailo Angelouich gubernatori Rassie" (10. 4. 1458) Cons. Rog. XV, 236.

[955] (24. 4. 1458) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai emlekek* I, 19-21.

in the Despotate, immediately after Lazar's death, King Tomaš was actively involved as well.[956] Tomaš's communication with Sultan Mehmed II was influenced by the incursion of the Ottoman army in previous months.[957]

After Anđelović's capture, Helena and Lazar's blind brother Stefan, who was proclaimed despot in May, took over the Despotate.[958] During September, Mahmud Pasha sought to free his brother from the Smederevo prison through Herzog Stjepan, but it is unknown to what extent Kosača was involved in his case.[959] During the summer, negotiations were once again activated for the exchange of still unconquered parts of the Despotate with the Hungarians, in which Helena and Stefan would receive possessions in Hungary that were previously owned by Despot Đurađ. Various combinations were considered, including the surrender of only Golubac or the entire state, but a final agreement was not reached.[960] The Despotate's political and territorial situation changed day by day. In August, the Ottomans captured Golubac, making it clear that Smederevo would not be able to hold out for much longer.[961] Despite the achieved truce, fear of the Ottomans persisted in Bosnia, as they were present in almost the entire territory of the former Despotate.

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956 (21. 4. 1458) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai* I, 18. Macuscev, *Monumenta historica* II, 114-115. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 543. Ćorović, *Historija*, 527. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 235. Đuro Tošić, "Posljednja bosanska kraljica Mara (Jelena)", *ZIBiH* 3, SANU, Beograd 2002, 32-33. Momčilo Spremić, "Borbe za Smederevo 1458-1459. godine", in: *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, 216. Isailović, "Bračni planovi", 210. Aleksandar Krstić, "Which Realm Will You Opt For?-The Serbian Nobility Between the Ottomans and the Hungarians in the 15th Century", in: *State and Society in the Balkans Before and After Establishment of Ottoman Rule*, Belgrade 2017, 138-139.

957 Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 386.

958 Spremić, "Propast srednjovjekovne države", 306. Spremić, "Despot Stefan Branković slepi", 125-127.

959 (28. 9. 1458) Lett. di Lev. XVI, 81. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 236. In the middle of the month, the Ragusans were maintaining diplomatic contact with Mahmud Pasha regarding the situation with his brother. (16. 9. 1458) Cons. Rog. XV, 276.

960 Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 387. Velimir Stefanović, "Kralj Matija i Srpska despotovina", *LMS* CV, 330/3, Novi Sad 1931, 248-249. Radonić, "Sporazum u Tati", 223. Spremić, "Despot Stefan Branković slepi", 127. Đorđe Bubalo, "Posedi srpskih despota u odbrambenim planovima Kraljevine Ugarske 1458. i 1459. godine", in: *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, 236-237. Spremić, "Borbe za Smederevo 1458-1459. godine", 218-219.

961 Spremić, "Despot Stefan Branković slepi", 128. Spremić, "Borbe za Smederevo 1458-1459. godine", 220.

The final episode: Bosnian prince Stjepan Tomašević assumes control over the Despotate

After unsuccessful negotiations with Helena and Stefan, the Hungarians remained actively involved in finding a solution to the Despotate issue. Helena Palaiologina did not see Stefan Branković as a political figure capable of finding a solution to the situation. By autumn 1458, the idea of marrying Stjepan, Tomaš's son, to Jelena Branković was revived in order to bind the remaining territory of Despotate to a stronger political framework. This move was in line with Bosnian, Hungarian, and Serbian interests. For this purpose, a Bosnian delegation consisting of the king's brother, Prince Radivoj Ostojić, Nikola Testa, and the Franciscan friar Marin, stayed in Belgrade in October. According to Tomasis' report, King Matthias agreed to all Bosnian demands, upon which the envoys presented Tomaš's promise to participate in the war against the Ottomans.[962] In Buda, they already had new information about the substantial Ottoman army in the recently conquered territory of the Despotate.[963] Although Tomasis' report does not explicitly state it, it is most likely that at this meeting, the Bosnian delegation obtained Hungarian approval for taking over the remaining parts of the Despotate.

Parallel to these activities, Bosnian diplomats also engaged in negotiations with Helena and Stefan. This conclusion is indicated by the fact that just a few days after the mentioned report, Tomaš issued a charter to the logothete Stefan Ratković, who conducted negotiations on behalf of the Smederevo court. In the charter addressed to Ratković, composed in mid-October 1458 in Žepče, Tomaš, together with his son Stjepan, emphasizes that the logothete

[962] (8. 10. 1458) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai* I, 38-39. Macuscev, *Monumenta historica* II, 221. Thallóczy, *Studien*, 99. Anto Babić, "Diplomatska služba u srednjevjekovnoj Bosni", *Radovi* Naučnog društva BiH XIII, Sarajevo 1960, 54-55. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 316. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 329. Isailović, "Bračni planovi", 210. Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 247.

[963] (1. 10. 1458) Macuscev, *Monumenta historica* II, 220.

was sent to Bosnia by Helena, implying that earlier negotiations were conducted in Bosnia. Taking into account the reports from early October stating that there was a large number of Ottoman soldiers in the Despotate, it is quite certain that King Tomaš sought to avoid encounters between his envoys and the Ottomans. Contacts between the Bosnian court and the logothete Stefan were most likely established during the initial negotiations for the marriage proposal in early 1458. Additionally, considering the fact that Tomaš states in the charter that Ratković had shown loyalty and true service to him since Lazar's death, it can be inferred that their connection existed prior to these events. The Bosnian king was aware that a battle with the Ottomans awaited him over **срьбьскога господьства**, which is why a clause was included stating that if the Ottoman threat was not eliminated, Ratković was free to come to Bosnia, where the king had prepared a hundred houses for him as *baština* (heritage). Confirming the logothete's previous possessions during the reign of Despots Đurađ and Lazar as a pronoia, the Bosnian king acknowledged them as *baština* (heritage) and also granted Ratković the possessions held by Dukes Mihailo Anđelović and Marko Altomanović. Particularly significant is Tomaš's confirmation of the possessions in the Lepenica, Ostrovica, Borač, Smederevo, and Nekudim regions within the Despotate territory, indicating an area that had certainly not yet fallen under Ottoman rule. The charter explicitly states that Tomaš began to **господовати ѳ срьбскомь господьств**, making a clear distinction from **ρѳсага кралевьства босанськога.**[964]

King Tomaš's ambitious plans to establish Bosnian rule over the Despotate required further negotiations with King Matthias. Immediately after

[964] (14. 10. 1458) Miklosich, *Monumenta*, 481. Rački, "Prilozi", 156-158. The references to the partial segments of Tomaš's charter to Stefan Ratković see in: Georgije Ostrogorski, *Pronija-Prilog istoriji feudalizma u Vizantiji i južnoslovenskim zemljama,* SAN, Beograd 1951, 148-151. Bartuiss, "Serbian Pronoia", 207-210. Ivanović, "Pronija u državi srpskih despota", 330, 335. Mrgić, "Župe i naselja zemlje Usore", 38. Spremić, *Despot*, 628. Momčilo Spremić, "Despot Đurađ Branković i Mačvanska banovina", in: *Prekinut uspon. Srpske zemlje u poznom srednjem veku*, 102. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 329. Isailović, "Bračni planovi", 210. Mišić, "Obnova Despotovine", 68. Mrgić, "Poslednja dva Kotromanića", 200. The attempt of locating the village from Tomaš's charter to Stefan Ratković see in: Siniša Mišić, "Posedi velikog logoteta Stefana Ratkovića", in: *Moravska Srbija. Istorija-kultura-umetnost*, 10-13. About the title of logothete, see: *Leksikon srpskog srednjeg veka*, 369-371.

finalizing the agreement with Helena, Tomaš prepared for a trip to Hungary, where his arrival in mid-November was announced by Corvinus, stating that significant matters would be discussed.[965] By the end of November, the Hungarian ruler had information that King Tomaš would soon arrive in Szeged for the assembly.[966] The Bosnian king stayed in Hungary until mid-January 1459. The results of prolonged negotiations included a joint action against the Ottomans, based on Tomaš's decision to cease paying tribute to the Ottomans, while Corvinus committed to defending Bosnia. During the assembly, the Hungarian side confirmed the earlier agreement between Tomaš and Helena. According to the contract, Stjepan Tomašević was supposed to assume power in Smederevo as soon as possible and take the lead in defending the Despotate and the southern Hungarian border.[967] However, Bosnia faced the danger of new Ottoman attacks at the beginning of 1459. Bosnian envoys were in Ragusa in mid-January 1459, purchasing weapons for defense.[968] The fact that Herzog Stjepan was also preparing for the upcoming events is evidenced by the information that his envoys, alongside Tomaš's, found themselves in Ragusa to withdraw funds.[969] The situation in Bosnia was still peaceful at the beginning of the year, and the Ragusan authorities sent envoys to Hungary via Bosnian territories in mid-January.[970] By the end of January, however, the situation in Bosnia had abruptly changed. In the following month, Tomaš wrote to the Bishop of Várad and Matthias' advisor, John Vitéz, about the difficult situation he found upon his return from Hungary. Writing from Jezero near Jajce,

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[965] (15. 11. 1458) Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, 237.

[966] (29. 11. 1458) Teleki, *Hunyadiak* X, 604.

[967] Thallóczy, *Studien*, 101-102. Spremić, "Propast srednjovekovne države", 310. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 330. Isailović, "Bračni planovi", 211.

[968] "de consentiendo Ruscho Tudrouich nomine serenissimi domini regis Bosne balistas sex et macios ducentos spagi" (15. 1. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 7. At the same time, envoys of Mara Branković were staying in Ragusa, withdrawing gold from the deposits. (9. 1. 1459) Ibid., 5.

[969] (18. 1. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 7v.

[970] "quod ambassiatoris nostri ituri in Hungariam debeant ire per viam Bosne" (20. 1. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 8v. Another alternative proposal was: "per viam Spaleti" Ibid.

the Bosnian king mentioned that just before his return, Ottoman voivodes with their armies had entered Vrhbosna, besieged Bobovac and Vranduk, where the heir to the throne, Stjepan, and his uncle Radivoj were located. It was certainly strong pressure that led Tomaš to portray his future in a bleak light, emphasizing his belief that the Ottomans would attempt to conquer his state in the spring while seeking the promised assistance from the Hungarian king. Despite the Ottoman threat, Tomaš did not give up on his plan to assume power over the Despotate and expressed hope that his son Stjepan would succeed in going to Smederevo, as previously agreed upon.[971]

Stjepan's departure from Bobovac to Smederevo could have taken place from mid-February to mid-March 1459. The Ragusan authorities apparently had information that Stjepan was still with King Tomaš when they sent a letter to both of them in mid-February.[972] Although the letter's content is unknown, it is certain that the Ragusans were interested in current affairs and Stjepan's assumption of the Despotate. Upon arriving in Smederevo, proclaiming himself a despot on March 21, the Bosnian prince assumed power.[973] As soon as the new despot arrived in Smederevo, he found himself in an extremely difficult position. In mid-March, Tomasis reported to the Venetian authorities from Budva about the new movement of the Ottoman army towards Sofia, which was believed to soon attack the Despotate.[974] By early April, the Venetians already had information that Mehmed II was in Sofia, that Ottoman forces were concentrated on the Sava River, and that they were causing significant damage to the Despotate.[975] Despite the Ottoman threat, on April 1, the wedding of Despot Stjepan Tomašević and Jelena

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[971] (10. 2. 1459) Thallóczy, *Studien*, 100-101. Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 388. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 546. Ćorović, *Historija*, 529. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 332. Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 389.

[972] "scribendi ad maiestatem Regis Bosne et ad comitem Stephanum eius filium" (13. 2. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 16.

[973] (21. 3. 1459) Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 244.

[974] (14. 3. 1459) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai* I, 43. Macuscev, *Monumenta historica* II, 221-222. Spremić, "Propast srednjovekovne države", 311.

[975] (1. 4. 1459) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai* I, 46.

Branković was held, formally establishing the legitimacy of the Bosnian heir's rule over the Despotate.[976]

This event motivated King Tomaš to address the Milanese Herzog Francesco Sforza, feeling obliged to inform him about Stjepan's marriage, considering the fact that negotiations for the marriage of the Bosnian prince to Sforza's daughter had taken place in previous years. In a letter composed in Bobovac in early May, Tomaš emphasized that by marrying Lazar's daughter, his son had been chosen to rule over the Despotate by the will of *omnium Rascianorum*, as proclaimed by the Hungarian King Matthias, and that he had been entrusted with possessions in Hungary and parts of the Despotate that the Ottomans had not yet conquered.[977] Sforza sent a response to the Bosnian king from Milan in June, in which, along with congratulations on Stjepan's marriage, he highlighted that the choice of Lazar's daughter was the better option.[978] Stefan Branković did not fit into the new rule in Smederevo, as he apparently opposed Stjepan's enthronement in the position he had held since May 1458. It seems that Đurađ's blind son did not have many supporters in Smederevo. The chronicler reports that he was expelled from the capital following the marriage of Stjepan and Jelena.[979] In the following months, Stefan was in Buda. In late June, the Ragusans sent him a letter, still addressing him as a

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976 (1. 4. 1459) Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 244. Stjepan's wife Jelena, later called Mara, was born around 1447 and was no more than 12 years old at the time of her marriage. About Jelena (Mara), see: Ilarion Ruvarac, "Dvije bosanske kraljice", *GZM* V, Sarajevo 1893, 568. Tošić, "Posljednja bosanska kraljica", 29-60. Senja Mahinić, "Životni put posljednje bosanske kraljice Mare", *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta u Sarajevu* XVII/3, Sarajevo 2014, 211-224. Lazar's daughter is mentioned in the peace treaty between Despot Đurađ and Hunyadi in 1451. Spremić, *Despot*, 429.

977 (1. 5. 1459) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai* I, 49-50. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 547. Tošić, "Posljednja bosanska kraljica", 35-36. Isailović, "Bračni planovi", 212. Mrgić, "Poslednja dva Kotromanića", 200. Dedić, "Serbian Princesses at the Bosnian courts in the 15th Century", 249.

978 (11. 6. 1459) Thallóczy, *Studien*, 94-95. Tošić, "Poslednja bosanska kraljica", 36. Isailović, "Bračni planovi", 212.

979 (8. 4. 1459) Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 244. Ćorović, *Historija*, 531. Spremić, "Despot Đurađ Branković slepi", 130.

despot.[980] Stjepan's wedding to Jelena was also celebrated by the Ragusans, who sent gifts to Tomaš in mid-May.[981]

During the first month of his rule in the Despotate, Stjepan communicated with the Ragusans. Late in April, the Ragusan authorities allowed the prince and the Minor Council to compose a letter for Despot Stjepan; however, the details of this letter are unknown.[982] At the same time, reports were sent from Ragusa to Buda about King Tomaš's conflict with the Ottomans near Hodidjed. The Bosnian king attacked Hodidjed, where Ottoman forces were stationed, and during the attack, he burned down the sub-town.[983] Upon the annulment of the established peace, the Bosnian king was forced to resist Ottoman attacks with all his might in order to preserve the Kingdom and to secure at least a somewhat easier position for his son Stjepan in Smederevo. The agreement with King Matthias, despite the danger Bosnia was in, remained only on paper. In early April, Hungary's southern border was also threatened by Ottoman incursions.[984] In May, King Tomaš reached out to the Venetians for help due to the threat to his state from Ottoman attacks, however, the Venetians were not willing to assist him. The Venetian Senate suggested to the Bosnian king that he appeal to the Assembly in Mantua, convened by the Roman Pope.[985] The Bosnian king sent his delegation to Mantua, requesting military assistance from Pope Pius II (1458-1464), but the weak response from European rulers

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[980] "de firmando litteram directiuam despoto Stiepano quod est Bude." (27. 6. 1459) Con. Rog. XVI, 55. A year later, the Ragusans identified him in one decision as "Stiepani Despotouich" (19. 1. 1460) Cons. Rog. XVI, 99v. On the further fate of Stefan Branković, see: Spremić, "Despot Stefan Branković slepi", 131-141.

[981] (15. 5. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 43. (19. 5. 1459) (23. 5. 1459) Cons. Minus XV, 21v, 23.

[982] "de scribendo Smedrevum domino Stephano filio regis Bosne" (27. 4. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 34.

[983] (26. 4. 1459) Lett. di Lev. XVI, 64. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 618. At the end of April, the Ragusan Council held a discussion about Tomaš's requests. (30. 4. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 36. It was probably a tribute that the Ragusans mentioned a few days later. (5. 4. 1459) Ibid., 37.

[984] (11. 4. 1459) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai* I, 47.

[985] (31. 5. 1459) Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai* I, 31 (with the wrong date in the header). Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 300.

resulted in limited help for Bosnia.[986] During Stjepan's rule over the Despotate, a similar atmosphere prevailed. In late May, the Franciscan friar Nicola Barbuci informed Carvajal that he personally saw a letter from the young despot in which he pointed out that he was under strong Ottoman pressure in the Despotate and that he needed help. He stated that, unless he received outside assistance, he would be forced to leave Smederevo since he did not dare to wait for the arrival of that *diaboli Machomet*.[987] It is evident from the information presented that the flow of information during those days was extremely difficult. Due to the presence of Ottoman forces in Bosnia and the Despotate, timely delivery of information was hindered in Ragusa. Early in June, Ragusan authorities decided that their subjects should be sent to Srebrenica and Smederevo in order to assess the situation there.[988]

The Ottoman pressure on Bosnia and the Despotate in mid-1459 grew stronger day by day. Sultan Mehmed II did not consider the Bosnian attempt to take over the Despotate legitimate. In early June, in Ragusa, they had information that the Hungarians were finally planning to defend their southern possessions with the headquarters in Belgrade.[989] During those days, the authorities drafted a letter for King Tomaš, but the details of the correspondence are unknown.[990] At the time of the greatest danger to the existence of the Despotate, Pope Pius II, through his legates, engaged in selling indulgences in Hungary and preaching a crusade in Bosnia and the Despotate.[991] The Ottoman forces, which had been on the territory of the Despotate for months, arrived in the vicinity of Smederevo in early June.

986 (9. 5. 1459) Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, 239-240. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 300. Tomo Vukšić, "Papa Pio II. i kralj Stjepan Tomaš", in: *Fenomen "krstjani" u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni i Humu*, Institut za istoriju u Sarajevu-Hrvatski institut za povijest, Sarajevo-Zagreb 2005, 278-279.

987 (31. 5. 1459) Thallóczy, *Studien*, 416. Isailović, "Bračni planovi", 212.

988 "expediendi unun caballarium ad viam Smedreui et unum corerium ad viam Srebreniza causa explorandi et inquirendi de nouis" (5. 6. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 49v. A month later, the Ragusan authorities discussed rewarding their subject who went to Smederevo in their service. (9. 7. 1459) Ibid., 57.

989 (11. 6. 1459) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 245-246.

990 (9. 6. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 51.

991 Kalić-Mijušković, *Beograd u srednjem veku*, 186.

Left with minor military forces, including personal guards and a small Hungarian garrison, and having not received the often-promised aid from the West, Despot Stjepan was forced to act exactly according to the plan he had outlined in the letter he had reported to Barbuci a month earlier. Serbian chronicles record that on June 20, 1459, that **прѣдадеть се Смедерево царѹ Мехемедѹ**, that is, that **ѹзе Мемед Челепїа Смедерево.**[992] Despot Stjepan managed to leave Smederevo with his wife and his uncle Radivoj and headed for Bosnia.[993] After three months of Bosnian rule over the Despotate, state that had been dismembered and weakened years earlier reached its end. News of the loss of Smederevo and the final conquest of the Despotate spread quickly. In early July, the Ragusans were already informing the Pope about the news they had learned.[994] The sultan granted control over the territory of the former Despotate to Mehmed-bey Minetović, with whom the Ragusans had been in direct contact since September 1459. [995]

Numerous contemporary chronicles describe the fall of Smederevo to the Ottomans. The memory of the loss of Smederevo during the reign of Despot Stjepan Tomašević did not fade even four years later when the Ottoman army embarked on its final campaign against the same ruler, who then held the title of Bosnian king.[996] In addition to the mentioned Serbian chronicles, this event was recorded by the Croatian chronicler Ivan Tomašić, stating that the Bosnian king surrendered Smederevo to the Ottomans.[997] The Ragusan, Orbini, briefly mentions the same event, also referring to the

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[992] (20. 6. 1459) Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 244.

[993] Tošić, "Posljednja dva Kotromanića", 38.

[994] (3. 7. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 55v.

[995] "de donando voyuode Meghmetbegh Muniatouich domino Slauonie et Stiepano eius ambassiatori" (10. 9. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 71.

[996] "**воева цар на Босноу и ѻѳхвати Стефана, зета деспота Лазара дасть царѹ Смѣдерево, и главѹ же емоу отсече, а брата моу и сестроу зароби**" Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 246. Ruvarac, "Dvije bosanske kraljice", 573.

[997] "Anno Domini 1459 rex Thomas Bosne obtinuit castrum Zmidereuo a Thurcis in pasce et ibidem dedit Turcis." Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, *Chronica breve Regni Croatiae Joannis Tomasich minoritae-Kratak Ljetopis hrvatske Ivana Tomašića, malobraćanina*, Arkiv za povijestnicu jugoslovensku IX, Zagreb 1868, 17. Tošić, "Posljednja bosanska kraljica", 36. Tošić, "Bosanska *nazovi* krivica", 187.

surrender of the town.[998] Jakov Lukarević, in a mixed order, mentions the marriage of Stjepan and Lazar's daughter, whom he calls Mara, and states that Jelena went to Hungary after the Ottoman conquest of the Despotate.[999] The chronicles of the Sutjeska and Fojnica monasteries, from 1459, record the coronation of King Tomaš and the loss of Smederevo by the Ottomans.[1000] Nikola de Lašva notes the betrayal of Smederevo by Bosnian King Stjepan, Lazar's son-in-law.[1001] This event was also documented in Byzantine chronicles. According to Critobulus, those who were in Smederevo during the siege were unable to withstand the pressure and agreed to leave the town with their belongings. According to him, Helena Palaiologina received two towns in Dalmatia and Bosnia from Sultan Mehmed II in exchange for Smederevo, and upon arriving in Bosnia, she decided to marry her daughter to the local ruler.[1002] Chronicler George Sphrantzes also mentions how Helena received fortresses held by the Ottomans in Bosnia.[1003] Chalcocondyles mentions the marriage of "Emperor of Illiryans" to Lazar's daughter

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[998] "Others say that this city was surrendered to the Turks by the Bosnian king Stefan, who, as the son-in-law of Lazar and the heir to the Kingdom of Raška, took over the entire administration of that kingdom after the death of his father-in-law.". Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 129.

[999] "Obedieua la Seruia a Stefano figliuolo naturale di Tomaso Re di Bosna, il quale haueua per moglie Maria figliuola di Lazaro Despot di Seruia … Le maggiore (come dicemmo) fu maridata a Stefano Re di Bosna … Perche Mechmet querelandosi di questo atto alla Porta, fu mandato Hali Angelouich, il quale occupo ogni cosa. Anna Despina con la famiglia si saluo in Ungaria, e poco dipoi mendo in Rausa." Lvccari, *Copioso*, 102.

[1000] "King Tomaš is crowned as Bosnian King and he lost Smederevo. Turks have conquered it." Ćiro Truhelka, "Fojnička kronika", *GZM* XXI/3, Sarajevo 1909, 446. Bono Benić, *Ljetopis sutješkog samostana*, Synopsis, Sarajevo-Zagreb 2003, 39.

[1001] "1459. Bosnian king Stipan, the son-in-law of the last Serbian ruler Lazar, betrayed Smederevo to the Turks." Nikola Lašvanin, *Ljetopis*, Synopsis, Sarajevo-Zagreb, 2003, 133.

[1002] Radivoj Radić, "Bosna u istorijskom delu Kritovula sa Imbrosa", *ZRVI* XLIII, Beograd 2006, 144. Maja Nikolić, "Vizantijski istoričari XV veka i pad Smedereva 1459. godine", in: *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, 249.

[1003] "The Sultan sent his beylerbey Mehmed to take Smederevo and the whole of Serbia peacefully, if possible, and instead to give the wife and children of this Lazar another area, which he did not achieve then, but only took Perister through treachery, and after some time also Smederevo and another town, and he allegedly gave the her some fortresses that the sultan owned in Bosnia." Sfrances, *Hronika*, 171.

and links the surrender of Smederevo to negotiations between the sultan and Lazar's widow.[1004] The Ekthesis Chronicle only provides information that Despot Thomas Palaiologos had two daughters, one of whom married the ruler of Serbia, and her daughter married the Bosnian king.[1005] According to an unknown chronicler, after the death of Despot Lazar, his wife retained control over Smederevo and married her daughter to the ruler of Bosnia. In response to these activities, the Ottomans launched an attack on Smederevo. Realizing that she could not withstand the siege, Lazar's widow surrendered the keys of the fortress to the Ottoman sultan, who allowed her to leave the town freely with her belongings.[1006]

The conquest of Smederevo was also documented in Ottoman chronicles. Dursun-bey, describing the conquest of Bosnia, states that the Bosnian king was bound by an agreement with the Ottoman Empire but he occupied Smederevo by referring to his marriage to the despot's daughter.[1007] Aşikpaşazade mentions that the sultan was preparing to attack Zvonik, but the Bosnian king, who ruled Smederevo, sent a message to Mehmed II, offering to surrender Smederevo if his lands were spared.[1008] Neşri reports that the Bosnian king feared the sultan's attack on his state and therefore offered to

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1004 "And since she held the acropolis of Smederevo, she concluded a marriage between the son of Emperor of the Illyrians and her daughter, intending to keep her power in the town... And the emperor, not yet knowing the state of affairs, got ready and went to Smederevo to take it by force. When those in the town of Smederevo learned that the king was coming, they set out to meet him, carrying his keys along the way. And the king took care of the Tribals, gifting many of them with land and treasure, and he agreed with Lazar's wife to let her go with her treasure, and he thus took over the fortress." Nikolić, "Vizantijski istoričari", 253.

1005 Boris Babić, *Vizantija i Bosna*, Filozofski fakultet Univerziteta u Banjoj Luci, Banja Luka 2016, 106-107.

1006 Radić, "Hronika", 336. Radivoj Radić, "Srbija u Hronici o turskim sultanima", in: *Moravska Srbija. Istorija-kultura-umetnost*, 2007, 125. Babić, *Vizantija i Bosna*, 118.

1007 Aleksandar Krstić, "Pad Srbije iz ugla osvajača: Ašikpašazade i Dursun-beg", in: *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, 309. Dino Mujadžević, "Pad Bosne 1463. prema osmanskim narativnim izvorima", in: *Stjepan Tomašević (1461.-1463)-slom srednjovjekovnoga Bosanskog Kraljevstva-Zbornik radova sa Znanstvenoga skupa održanog 11. i 12. studenoga 2011. godine u Jajcu*, Hrvatski institut za povijest-Katolički bogoslovni fakultet u Sarajevu, Zagreb 2013, 39-40.

1008 Krstić. "Pad Srbije iz ugla osvajača", 309.

exchange Smederevo for the fortress of Serayinik. The sultan accepted the proposal but, after taking control of Smederevo, did not fulfill the agreement due to King Tomaš's tribute debt.[1009] The difficult situation of Despot Stjepan in Smederevo is described by the janissary Konstantin Mihalović, who states that the Bosnian heir to the throne was weak in defense and that the Rašans preferred Smederevo to fall into the hands of the Ottomans rather than the Hungarians.[1010] A brief overview of the interpretations of the end of Bosnian rule over the Despotate through contemporary chronicles, despite evident deviations, points to the surrender of Smederevo by the political leadership at the time, which included Despot Stjepan, Radivoj, and Helena Palaiologina, who lacked the means to resist the Ottomans. It was a common occurrence in which the stronger and weaker sides were reflected in the Middle Ages.

Conquering Smederevo and the arrival of the Ottomans near the Hungarian borders caused fear and outrage in European political circles. The political and spiritual elite tried to conceal their inaction, shrouded in constant empty rhetoric, by blaming King Tomaš, Despot Stjepan, and Prince Radivoj as figures expected to defend the town. The concern of European courts, from the very beginning of the last idea of launching a Christian crusade, was focused on maintaining the Despotate, making the "sworn fighters" against the "Turkish infidels" feel more comfortable in their lavish courts. The Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus was the first to speak out, as he took care of confiscating the possessions in Požega County that Radivoj had acquired in Hungary at the beginning of July. Acting as prosecutor and judge, Corvinus quickly accused and convicted Radivoj of treason, which he believed had caused harm to all of Christendom by surrendering the

[1009] Filipović, *Bosansko kraljevstvo i Osmansko carstvo*, 394.

[1010] "Following the death of the despot and his son Lazar, Smederevo, along with other towns, was taken over by Bosnian king Tomašević, who was married to Lazar's daughter. However, he had a very weak defense due to his fear of the Turkish emperor. The people of Raška, due to the governor's dishonesty, preferred to see Smederevo fall into the hands of the Turks rather than the Hungarians. Smederevo would never have fallen into the pagan hands if everything had been carried out with good intentions." Mihailović, *Uspomene*, 39.

fortress of Smederevo.[1011] Despot Stjepan, who was already a former despot at that time, did not fare any better with Corvinus, as just a few days after Radivoj's confiscation, his possessions in Tokaj County were also taken away.[1012] It was evident that the Bosnian-Hungarian plan regarding the future of Smederevo had become nothing more than a passing episode, back when the Bosnian crown prince and his entourage were leaving the Serbian capital towards the borders of the Kingdom of Bosnia.

The main propagator of the imaginary crusade, Pope Pius II, observed the conquest of Smederevo with a sense of nostalgia in a letter to the Margrave of Brandenburg, recalling an episode several years earlier when the millennium-old Byzantine capital had been destroyed.[1013] In late July, the Pope wrote to Carvajal about the treason committed by *perfidia Regis Bosne*, who had left Smederevo to the Ottomans. The Pope's fears were reflected in the danger facing the Kingdom of Hungary, led by *filii nostri Mathie*.[1014] A year later, in a letter to Carvajal, Pius II emphasized that the whole world was aware of Tomaš's treacherous activities.[1015] The loss of Smederevo, which suddenly became a sacred Christian stronghold, fell primarily on the

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1011 (12. 7. 1459) Thallóczy, *Studien*, 105-106. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 333-334. Stanko Andrić, "O obitelji bosanskog protukralja Radivoja Ostojića (prilog rasvjetljavanju bračnih veza posljednjih Kotromanića s plemstvom iz dravsko-savskog međurječja)", in: *Stjepan Tomašević (1461.-1463)-slom srednjovjekovnoga Bosanskog Kraljevstva*, 121-122.

1012 Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 334. About the possessions that Despot Stjepan received in Hungary, see: Bubalo, "Posedi", 239-240.

1013 (24. 7. 1459) Johann Heinrich von Falkenstein, *Urkunden und Zeugnisse vom achten Seculo bis auf gegenwärtige Zeiten, worinnen die wichtigsten das Hochfürstliche Burggrafenthum Nürnberg und die von demselben absprossende beide in diesem Landes-Bezirk situirte Hochfürstliche Häuser Brandenburg-Anspach und Baireuth betreffende hohe Vorrechte, Freyheiten etc.,* Neustadt 1789, 333. Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, 240. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 333. Filipović, "The Anti-Ottoman Activities of Bosnian King Stjepan Tomaš", 238.

1014 (30. 7. 1459) Augustino Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta historica hungariam sacram*, II, Romae 1860, 330. Pejo Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska u XV. stoljeću*, Institut za istoriju, Sarajevo 2005, 51. Tošić, "Bosanska *nazovi* krivica", 188. Vukšić, "Papa Pio II. i kralj Stjepan Tomaš", 238.

1015 (12. 3. 1460) Istvan Kaprinai, *Hungaria diplomatica temporibus Mathiae ad Hunyad regis Hungariae* II, Typis Joannis Thomae novilis de Trattnern, sac. caes. reg. aulae typographi et bibliopolae, Vindabonae 1771, 400. Filipović, "The Anti-Ottoman Activities of Bosnian King Stjepan Tomaš", 239.

shoulders of King Tomaš, who, it seems, had never set foot in the Serbian capital during his lifetime. The Bosnian king tried to explain to the Pope the circumstances in which the Bosnian authority found itself in Smederevo. As a result, in July 1459, the Bosnian king attempted to secure a recommendation from the Ragusan authorities to the Pope.[1016]

At the end of the Bosnian rule over the Despotate, the current political public opinion forced the Bosnian Kingdom to settle accounts. Canceling the payment of tribute to Sultan Mehmed II, abandoned once again by King Matthias and the Pope after the fall of Smederevo, Tomaš found himself alone in the midst of pivotal times. With a change in religious course, the Bosnian king was forced to restore his connections with the Roman Curia. The Bosnian envoys informed Pope Pius II of King Tomaš's complete religious reorientation in the spring of 1460. In letters to King Matthias and Cardinal Carvajal in June 1460, the Pope relayed this news, instructing the legate to request that Duke Stjepan cease accepting exiles. The Pope explained to the Hungarian king how Tomaš's envoys had sought to prove that the loss of Smederevo was not due to ill will but out of necessity. They presented evidence of his commitment to the Catholic faith, citing the expulsion of followers of the Bosnian Church from his entire territory who had refused to convert to Catholicism.[1017] These actions by the Bosnian king were a direct result of the loss of Smederevo and the strong condemnation of the Pope and European rulers. Understanding that their only hope for survival against the overwhelmingly powerful Ottoman state lay with European religious and political centers, Tomaš took the only course of action available to him. Thus, during this pivotal time for the Bosnian state,

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1016 (19. 7. 1459) Cons. Rog. XVI, 59v.

1017 (7. 6. 1460) Kaprinai, *Hungaria diplomatica* II, 424. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta* II, 358-359. Srećko Džaja, "Bosansko kraljevstvo kroz prizmu bosanske krune, grba i biskupije", *Jukić* 15, Sarajevo 1985, 98. Pejo Ćošković, "Tomašev progon sljedbenika Crkve bosanske 1459", in: *Migracije i Bosna i Hercegovina*, Institut za proučavanje nacionalnih odnosa-Institut za istoriju, Sarajevo 1990, 44-45. Luka Špoljarić, "The Renaissance papacy and Catholicization of the 'Manichean Heretics'-Rethinking the 1459 purge of the Bosnian kingdom", in: *Global Reformations: Transforming Early Modern Religions, Societies and Cultures*, Routledge, London 2019, 158.

Bosnian rule over the Despotate came to an end, marking the beginning of the demise of the Bosnian Church. Shortly after the occupation of the Despotate, Ottoman forces turned their attention to Bosnian territory, gradually occupying it over the next few years and definitively destroying it in 1463.

V

SREBRENICA: THE APPLE OF DISCORD AND CONFLICT

V
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Circumstances in Srebrenica at the beginning of the 15th century

The rich ore deposits of the middle Podrinje region were mentioned as possessions of Bosnian rulers in the first half of the 14th century. In close proximity to the fortress of Srebrenik and the settlement Srebrenica, there were exceptionally significant deposits of silver ore that had been exploited since ancient times. In the mid-14th century, Srebrenica appeared in documents of Ragusan origin as a mining center where Ragusan merchants and craftsmen resided. Since that time, an increasing number of Ragusans have been recorded as economic entities with diverse business activities. In addition to trading various goods, there was particular interest in activities related to the leasing of ore deposits and customs. The increase in the number of business people in the second half of the 14th century was a direct indication of the growing scale of mining production. At the beginning of the 15th century, during the period when Srebrenica was under the direct rule of Bosnian King Stjepan Ostoja, the economic development of this settlement continued on an upward trajectory.[1018] During this time, Srebrenica held an important position with its own currency, and mining experts from neighboring countries who migrated there.[1019]

[1018] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 47-56. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 13-25.

[1019] (30. 9. 1403) The Ragusan citizen Tomko Beršić left a clause in his will for the repayment of his debt in Srebrenica coins. (4. 6. 1416) The will of Andria Menze mentions the relocation of the Todescho, a miner from Trepča to Srebrenica in 1402. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 5, 52.

During the Bosnian-Ragusan conflict from 1403 to 1405, the trade between the Republic of Ragusa and Bosnia experienced a decline, resulting in losses for the Ragusan Treasury. As early as March 1403, the Ragusans encountered the "novelties" introduced by the Bosnian king in Srebrenica.[1020] This term referred to any changes in the practice of rights that were inherited by the Ragusan subjects in Bosnia.[1021] Several months later, an envoy was sent from Ragusa to Srebrenica with letters,[1022] and in the following months, the Ragusans familiarized themselves with the situation that had arisen between the Republic and the Bosnian king.[1023] We can observe the intervention of the Ragusan authorities in late March 1404 when they sent envoys to the Bosnian king to restore the old privileges in Podvisoki and Srebrenica.[1024] In Bosnia, however, relations between magnates changed. The Ragusan envoys sent in May 1404 to Bosnia were supposed to seek the suppression of the established novelties in Podvisoki, Deževica, Srebrenica, and Drijeva, as well as the restoration of the privileges they had in these areas during the reigns of Kings Tvrtko I and Ostoja until 1403. It was important that the envoys mention that as a result of these novelties, their merchants had abandoned the trade route through Bosnia with Rudnik and other marketplaces in the Despotate.[1025] This letter left no doubt about the possession of Srebrenica, which still remained within the king's domain.

[1020] (28. 3. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 33v.

[1021] Babić, "Tradicija i historijsko pravo", 243-244.

[1022] (24. 6. 1403) Babić, "Tradicija i historijsko pravo", 153.

[1023] "de notificando mercatoribus nostris existentibus in mercato Srebernize modos et condicionis ocurssis inter nos et exercitus Bosne. Et de dimittendo in eorum arbitrio modos se saluandi cum personis et eorum habere in illis locis quibus mellius videbitur eis se posse saluare sine aliquo termino" (17. 7. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 159.

[1024] "Item se vigneri a concluder paxe debiate dir al Re come in so tempo li nostri mercadanti in Narento, in Souixochi, in Srebrenica et in molti altri luogi del reame foron agrauati" (30. 3. 1404) Lett. di Lev. IV, 64. Pucić, *Spomenici srpski* I, Primedbe IV-VII.

[1025] (29. 5. 1404) Lett. di Lev. IV, 66-66v. Pucić, *Spomenici srpski* I, Primedbe IX.

The cause of the decades-long conflicts: Sigismund's concession of Srebrenica to Despot Stefan

Changes in ownership of Srebrenica are discernible from a complaint made by the Ragusans in May 1405. It pertained to the circumstances of wartime diplomacy during Bosnia's war with Hungary, under the leadership of Hrvoje. During that time, Hrvoje's men in Srebrenica seized letters from Hungarian couriers intended for the Bosnian nobility. In this case, certain Ragusan citizens found themselves on Hrvoje's side.[1026] According to this information, Srebrenica was under the rule of Herzog Hrvoje as of May 1405 at the latest. Certain issues faced by Hrvoje's sister, Vučica, in the first half of 1404, may have provided a possible context for Hrvoje's efforts to incorporate Srebrenica into his domain.[1027] However, the chronological sequence of events does not suggest the ultimate viability of this thesis. Sources do not provide a clear description of Hrvoje's occupation of Srebrenica. The sequence of events indicates that the change in ownership of Srebrenica occurred during 1404, coinciding with the change on the Bosnian throne. Hrvoje led the Bosnian nobility, which gained privileges during the selection of a new king, and Hrvoje, among other things, acquired Srebrenica. Concurrently with Hrvoje's takeover of Srebrenica, the Ragusan chronicler Resti records in 1405, during the war between Bosnia and Hungary, the conquest of Srebrenica and Kliševac by

[1026] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 55.

[1027] Mihailo Dinić took into account the fact that Hrvoje's sister was married into the Zlatonosović family, immediate neighbors of Srebrenica. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 39. At the beginning of March 1404, Vučica and her sons Vuk and Branivoj received permission to come to Ragusa in case of danger. Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 487. Another piece of information that points to the problems between Vučica and Hrvoje is contained in the presented letter, by the Ragusan authorities, dated May 29, 1404. However, the context of that letter brings information that Srebrenica is still in the possession of the Bosnian king.

King Sigismund.[1028] Resti's account introduced broader calculations and a certain complexity to historiography.[1029] A Ragusan chronicler, Orbini, also mentions the Hungarian occupation of Srebrenica and Kliševac using the same pattern.[1030] Other sources do not report the possible Hungarian occupation of Srebrenica during those years.

Srebrenica, along with its surrounding areas, including the notable new fortresses of Brodar and Susjed, was part of Hrvoje's possessions at the latest until May 1410 when, through an agreement between Hrvoje and Sigismund, it came under Hungarian ownership. In late May, the Ragusans wrote to Sigismund that they had received information from their merchants that Srebrenik, Kučlat, Brodar, Susjed, and Srebrenica had become Hungarian possessions, for which they congratulated their suzerain.[1031] After years of conflict, Hrvoje reconciled with Sigismund in 1409, and in early 1410, the Hungarian king appointed him vice-king of Bosnia.[1032] Considering the economic significance of owning Srebrenica, the ceding of this mining center to the Hungarians formed the basis of a little-known agreement between Sigismund and his vassal Hrvoje.[1033] However, given that the acquisition of Srebrenica by the Hungarian crown did not weaken Ostoja's position, who at that time had no influence over the situation in Srebrenica, it is certain that broader and long-term moves were at play. Sigismund established the

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1028 "Ostoja vedendosi prevenuto, comincio in fretta ammassar un esercito di quindici mila uomini per vendicarsi; ma li Ragusei, che intanto avevano fatto entrare in grazia di Sigismondo il duca Harvoje, fecero, con qualche sovvegno di denari datili, che Harvoje entrasse in Bossina con buone truppe. E nel medesimo tempo le truppe di Sigismondo, entrate pur in quel regno, occuparono Srebarniza e Cruscevaz, dal che stordito Ostoja si fermo alla difesa della Bossina, senza poter portare la guerra sul paese della republica, come desiderava." Restius, *Chronica*, 208.

1029 Vukanović, "Srebrnica u srednjem veku", 56.

1030 Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 157-158.

1031 (30. 5. 1410) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 193-195. About Hrvoje's ceding of Srebrenica and neighboring towns to King Sigismund, see: Neven Isailović, "Jedan nepoznati izvor o predaji gradova Hrvoja Vukčića Hrvatinića ugarskom kralju Žigmundu 1410. godine", *IČ* LXIV, Beograd 2015, 144-146.

1032 Ćirković, *Istorija*, 214. Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 148. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 104.

1033 Lovrenović, *Na kliništu povijesti*, 150.

Usora region, from the Hungarian territories in this part of Bosnia, under direct Hungarian administration, initially under the control of city castellans and later under the bans of Hungary.[1034] Anticipating an opportunity to be crowned with the Bosnian crown, Sigismund stayed in the area between Srebrenica, Kliševac, Drina, and Sremska Rača on the Sava from early October to early November 1410. During his stay in Srebrenica, Sigismund issued a charter in October.[1035]

The establishment of the Hungarian administration in Srebrenica brought about certain changes. According to information contained in a letter from Ragusa, addressed to the court in Buda in April 1411, the Ragusan authorities complained about the Hungarian customs officer, Daniel, in Srebrenica and requested permission from the king for free trade with the Vlachs. The Ragusans emphasized that during the time when Srebrenica was under the control of the Bosnian king and Hrvoje, they did not pay any customs and freely passed through Srebrenica into Serbia. They advised the Hungarians to seek information about these rights from the Bosnian nobles Zlatonosović and Dinjičić.[1036] In late March and early April, the Ragusan authorities discussed the delivery of copies of privileges so that their merchants could invoke them for the protection of their interests.[1037]

The further development of the Ragusan appeals addressed to Sigismund remains overshadowed by the events of mid-April when the Bosnian army attacked Srebrenica. We observe the event through the lens of Ragusan diplomatic activities. In mid-April, the Ragusan authorities decided

[1034] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 214.

[1035] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 152.

[1036] "Quia rellacione nostrorum mercatorum habitantum in Srebreniça percepimus ad unum vostrum ibi pro gubernatore gabellarum dicti loci quo ut nome Deus respectando quod extis Latini lotamum heximie sperantes ... vostra nobilitas aliqua sinestra informatione non moueret se contra antiquam consuetu ... a principio dominorum de Bosna ciuibus nostris in Sreberniça etiamdo locorum circha vicinus illam vobis presentibus ducximus ... cum eorum mercanciis veniebant in Srebreniça franchi ab omni dano et gabella ... [4v] … Et hoc videre potest per literas eis factas et post per Regis Bosne et per magnificum dominum duccum Cheruoye et alios [5]" (5. 4. 1411) Lett. di Lev. VII, 4v-5. Vukanović, "Srebrnica u srednjem veku", 56. Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*, 76.

[1037] (31. 3. 1411) (4. 4. 1411) Ref. XXXIII, 183v, 293.

to write to Sandalj regarding the capture and looting of merchants in Srebrenica.[1038] At the end of April, they responded to Sandalj's diplomat[1039] and simultaneously sent a letter indicating that correspondence between these parties had taken place earlier. The Republic pleaded with Sandalj not to harm their merchants who were taken from Srebrenica, in case they were found on his territory.[1040] Ragusans provided a more detailed account of the events in a letter to their suzerain Sigismund in early May of the same year. According to their words, an attack on Srebrenica occurred in which Ragusan merchants, who had joined forces with the Hungarians in the defense of the town, were also killed. They requested that their merchants be recommended to the local authorities and hoped that the Hungarian king would react appropriately to these events.[1041] Considering the chronology of the correspondence, the attack on Srebrenica certainly took place in the first half of April 1411. The Ragusan letters do not specify who the attacker was. Taking into account the ongoing conflict between Bosnia and Hungary, earlier publications have highlighted the Bosnian rulers as the attackers, with a particular emphasis on Duke Sandalj as the leader of the Bosnian side.[1042] In addition to the usual ambitions of regaining control over the rich mine, the Bosnian side may have been motivated to attack Srebrenica by novelties introduced no later than the beginning of April 1411, which also harmed the local population. The presented Ragusan letter, addressed to Sigismund in early May 1411, represents chronologically the latest information about Hungarian authority in Srebrenica.

1038 "rescribendi voyuode Sandali supra capcione nostrorem ciuium et derobacionem facta in Srebernica ciuibus nostris" (16. 4. 1411) Ref. XXXIII, 293v.

1039 (29. 4. 1411) Ref. XXXIII, 294.

1040 (28. 4. 1411) Pucić, *Spomenici srpski* I, 102. (25. 4. 1411) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 280.

1041 (8. 5. 1411) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 200-201. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 56-57. Vukanović, "Srebrnica u srednjem veku", 56. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 166.

1042 Dinić-Knežević, *Dubrovnik i Ugarska*, 76. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 66. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 104. Radonić and Šišić believe that in 1411, the Hungarians had to occupy Srebrenica again. Šišić, *Vojvoda Hrvoje*, 223. Radonić, "O knezu Pavlu", 54. Ćorović believes that it was a rebellion by a domestic element. Ćorović, *Historija*, 406.

At the beginning of May 1411, tensions between the Bosnian and Hungarian authorities began to ease. An indication of this process was the permission granted by the Ragusan authorities to its merchants to freely travel to Bosnia and the Despotate.[1043] The activities undertaken towards reconciliation between the Bosnians and Hungarians at the end of May further contributed to calming the situation in Srebrenica. The attack on Srebrenica in April was a credible indication of the value of possessing Srebrenica, as well as the Hungarian inability to maintain their acquired territories deeper within Bosnian territory. The next mention of Srebrenica in May 1413 relates to a contract made by Ragusan craftsmen for the completion of work on a church in Srebrenica. According to the contract, two stonemasons were supposed to go *ad partes Sclauonie ad locum Srebernize*. This precise information indicates that Despot Stefan's rule had already been established in Srebrenica.[1044] Later references from Ragusa in a letter to the Hungarian king in August 1415 indicate that Srebrenica was handed over to the Serbian despot by the Hungarian king.[1045]

The mentioned events indicate strengthened relations between Sigismund and Despot Stefan in July 1411, when the despot was staying in Buda and being rewarded for his loyalty to the Hungarian crown. At that time, the Serbian despot received, among other things, mining sites in Szatmár, Németi, Nagy, and Felsőbánya as gifts.[1046] The granting of these possessions to Stefan by Sigismund is also attested by the biographer Constantine the Philosopher, who states that the despot stayed in Buda in 1412 and was rewarded with territories.[1047] In November 1412, a Ragusan delegation, in search of Sigismund, went to the territory of the Zlatonosović family to inquire about the location of the Hungarian king.[1048] While the Ragusan assessment was imprecise, it suggested that Sigismund might have been present near Srebrenica. However, it is difficult to connect this claim with the Hungarian possession of Srebrenica in

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1043 (2. 5. 1411) Ref. XXXIII, 294.

1044 Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 57.

1045 "Srebernizam, quam vestra serenitas dedit magnifico despoto Rassie" (18. 8. 1415) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 251.

1046 Radonić, "Sporazum u Tati", 158.

1047 Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 311-312.

1048 (9. 11. 1412) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 210-211.

November 1412. Due to the lack of sources between May 1411 and May 1413, historiography filled the gap with several assumptions based on the presented data.[1049] The weakness of such constructions lies in the fact that events in which Sigismund granted possessions to the despot were taken into account. There is no doubt that one of the richest mining centers in this part of Europe would be mentioned in those charters. The information about the grant of possessions by Sigismund during the festivities in Buda, as presented by the despot's biographer Constantine the Philosopher, provides a framework for when Srebrenica could have changed hands, considering that no charters regarding the allocation of territory from the middle of 1412 have been preserved.

According to further indications, after the first mention of Srebrenica as part of the Despotate, established trade routes through Bosnian territory continued unhindered.[1050] In early March 1414, the first complaints from the Ragusans regarding the imposition of new taxes in Srebrenica arose. The Ragusans discussed sending letters to Despot Stefan, customs officials, and their merchants in Srebrenica.[1051] From a letter addressed to the Ragusan merchants, it is evident that the problems in Srebrenica arose due to customs and taxes.[1052] The information presented in this letter indicates that after taking over Srebrenica, Despot Stefan confirmed the privileges previously granted to Ragusa by King Tvrtko. These changes in trading rights in Srebrenica should be viewed through the lens of the despot's new strategic policy towards Ragusan merchants, as the authorities, parallel to the events in Srebrenica in February 1414, also complained about problems faced by merchants in Novo Brdo.[1053] In early June, a letter was also sent to a Ragusan citizen and customs official, Marin Gradi, in which they highlighted the complaints against him, claiming that he was unloading goods and charging

[1049] About the models of the chronological framework of Sigismund's cession of Srebrenica to Despot Stefan in detail in: Vukanović, "Srebrnica u srednjem veku", 57.

[1050] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 34-35.

[1051] (5. 3. 1414) Ref. XXXIV, 216, 216v.

[1052] "dati a sauer le nouita nel fare el signor despotto contra de vuy metando dohana ouer colta ali mercadanti Ragusei" (6. 3. 1414) Lett. di Lev. VII, 100.

[1053] (21. 2. 1414) Ref. XXXIV, 215v.

double the usual price per load at the Drina crossing.[1054] Information from early August 1414 indicates changes in trade between Ragusa and Srebrenica when, due to the problematic situation in Bosnia, merchants were allowed to travel *ad viam Scutari*.[1055] Ragusans' efforts to overturn the newly imposed taxes were not successful. In December 1414, a lengthy dispute began between the Ragusan authorities and Despot Stefan over the issues faced by the Ragusans whose silver had been confiscated by the despot's officials.[1056] In the second half of December, Marin Gondola pledged to Stjepko Pavlović that his brother Ivan would go to the despot from Podzvonik as soon as possible regarding the imprisonment of Živko Ligatić and the confiscation of his property by the despot's officials in Srebrenica.[1057] The Ragusans complained to Despot Stefan about the taxes in Srebrenica, which harmed their subjects and violated the old privileges granted by King Tvrtko I, Dabiša, Hrvoje, and the despot himself.[1058]

The problems with the authorities in Srebrenica were emphasized by the Ragusan envoys at the end of January 1415 when the delegation, following the authorities' instructions, went to Đurađ Branković. Then they were supposed to stop by Despot Stefan Lazarević and talk about the severity of the officials who forcefully take things from their merchants in Srebrenica

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1054 (6. 6. 1414) Lett. di Lev. VII, 102.

1055 (3. 8. 1414) Ref. XXXIV, 227.

1056 "de dando commisionem et literas credentiales ser Johanni ser Jacobi de Gondola ambasiatori ituro ad dominum despotum pro argento accepto Zuicho Ligatich, Stiepcho Paulouich et aliis mercatoribus nostris Strebernize, qui ser Johannes vadat sumptibus predictorum mercatorum nostrorum" (18. 12. 1414) Ref. XXXIV, 237. (22. 12. 1414) Div. Not. XII, 65v.

1057 "Ser Marinus Ja. de Gondola promisit et se obligauit Stiepcho Paulouich, presenti et stipulanti, facere et curare iuxta posse quod ser Johannes eius frater qui ad presens, uti dicitur reperitur in Subsuonich, habita commisione sibi destinanda per dominium Ragusii quam citius poterit, non sinistrando negocia sua ibit ad dominum despotum et ibi procurabit toto posse pro relaxatione Ziuchi Ligatich et recuperatione argenti et aliarum rerum acceptarum per officiales dicti domini despoti dicto Ziucho in Sreberniza." (22. 12. 1414), Div. Not., XII, 65v.

1058 "da tuti signori del dicto luogo de Sreberniza et prima dal Re Tuertcho, Re Dabissa et Cheruoy per fin che teneno lo deto luogo et etiamdio del deto signor, lo despoto per fin al presente solicitando et procurando in questi facti a relaxiation del dicto citadin nostro et recuperation dele dicto cosse tolte con quegli bolli modi maniere et parole" (21. 12. 1414) Lett. di Lev. VII, 116v.

and other marketplaces, which could lead to the suspension of trade with the Despotate.[1059] In mid-March 1415, correspondence between the Ragusans and Despot Stefan continued regarding the case of Živko Ligatić, who had been imprisoned by the authorities in Srebrenica, and the property he owned together with his companion Stjepko Pavlović was confiscated.[1060] Two months later, the Ragusans wrote about the same case, presenting documentation proving their joint property in Srebrenica.[1061] The situation did not improve, and at the end of November 1415, the Ragusans decided to send letters to the despot and an unnamed metropolitan regarding the damages inflicted on Ragusan merchants in Srebrenica.[1062] Shortly after, envoy Marin Gradi was sent with letters to Despot Stefan and Metropolitan Isidor, complaining about the confiscation of money from Ragusan merchants.[1063] Nicola Goze was also referred to the despot regarding the case of Stjepko Pavlović at the end of December.[1064]

The presence and movements of the Ottoman army, which had been in Bosnia since 1414, influenced the formation of unstable conditions in the vicinity of Srebrenica. The Ragusans stationed in Srebrenica were well-informed about the events in Bosnia during this time. At the end of June 1415, they reported on the movements of the Hungarian army based in Usora.[1065] After the battle in Lašva in July 1415, in which the Hungarians were defeated in Bosnia, a period of temporary unity and peace among the Bosnian king and nobles ensued. In early August, the Ragusans received a letter from János Maróti, who was captured in Podzvečan. On that occasion, he emphasized

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1059 "Et non obstantia questo pur de algun tempo in qua in Srebreniza et altri mercati per alguni suoi officiali e state tolte mercantie a delli nostri mercatanti contra a lor volonta" (17. 1. 1415) Lett. di Lev. VII, 119.

1060 (16. 3. 1415) Pucić, *Spomenici srpski* I, 128-129.

1061 (15. 5. 1415) Pucić, *Spomenici srpski* I, 130. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 63-64. Vukanović, Srebrnica u srednjem veku", 58-59.

1062 (29. 11. 1415) (30. 11. 1415) Cons. Rog. I, 29v.

1063 Lett. di Lev. VII, 141v.

1064 (27. 12. 1415) Cons. Rog. I, 32v.

1065 (28. 5. 1415) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 250. Ćirković, "Dve godine", 33.

to Sigismund that Hrvoje and Sandalj had reconciled in Bosnia and that the Bosnians were united against the Hungarians.[1066]

In August 1415, along with Maróti's letter, the Ragusans sent their own letter to Sigismund, emphasizing that the Bosnian magnates had decided at the council to attack Srebrenica, which Sigismund had handed over to Despot Stefan.[1067] The sequence of events provided the Bosnian nobles with a solid basis for attempting to regain control of Srebrenica. The Hungarian defeat in Lašva had destabilized them in this region, significantly hampering their potential interference. Hrvoje had good relations with the Ottomans, whom he had brought to Bosnia a year earlier. Not long before that, Ostoja had been recognized by the Ottomans as the Bosnian king, while unity among the Bosnian magnates was the final necessary link for the attack on Srebrenica. Srebrenica reappears in sources at the end of September 1415 when the Ragusans appointed judges for a dispute, but without information about the suzerain.[1068] The next mention of Srebrenica comes from a contract for transporting goods to Ljubskovo in the second half of September, in which well-known Vlach carriers Herak Milošević and Klapac Stanković commit to transporting goods with 53 horses *ad viazium in Srebrniza*, but without specifying to whom Srebrenica belonged.[1069] More specific information about the possession of Srebrenica is provided by the decisions of the Ragusan council in November 1415 regarding the issues of merchants in Srebrenica. During this time, the Ragusan authorities discussed the restitution of property seized from Ragusan residents in Srebrenica by the Serbian despot, and they sought assistance from Srebrenica Duke Bogdan and the metropolitan in relation to this matter.[1070]

1066 (6. 8. 1415) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 251. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 209.

1067 "Preterea barones Bosne fuerunt ad universale colloquium a deliberaurunt auferre Srebnizam quam vostra serenita dedit magnifico despoto Rassie" (18. 8. 1415) Lett. di Lev. VII, 132v. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 251.

1068 (28. 9. 1415) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 9.

1069 (21. 9. 1415) Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, 187.

1070 (4. 11. 1415) (23. 11. 1415) Cons. Minus I, 46, 48v. (5. 11. 1415) (9. 11. 1415) (12. 11. 1415) (23. 11. 1415) (29. 11. 1415) (30. 11. 1415) Cons. Rog. I, 28, 28v, 29, 29v, 30.

The presented data illustrate the situation in Srebrenica and its surroundings between mid-August and late November 1415. These data, summarized in one place, indicate that there was no change of authority in this area during that time frame, nor is there any written evidence of a military attack. Despite the readiness of the Bosnian nobles for such an endeavor, it appears that the causes of inactivity on the eastern Bosnian border should be sought in the loss of unity in the internal politics of the Bosnian state, prompted by events in the second half of August 1415, when the assassination of Prince Pavle Radinović occurred, leading to a new polarization of forces in Bosnia.[1071]

[1071] On the murder of Pavle Radinović, see: Radonić, "O knezu Pavlu", 59-60. Ćorović, *Historija*, 417-418. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 243-244. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, 143-144. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 216. Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda*, 209-212.

The activities of Bosnian rulers towards Srebrenica (1415-1430)

By changing ownership of Srebrenica through the orchestrated friendly policies of King Sigismund and Despot Stefan, new times began for the Republic and the Ragusan merchants in this mining center. Despot Stefan's attempts to establish unified customs regulations and other taxes in Srebrenica, as well as in other centers in the Despotate, led to frequent diplomatic interventions, with Ragusans' main argumentation resting on charters and agreements they had for Srebrenica from the time of Bosnian kings and Herzog Hrvoje. In early 1416, Ragusan merchants encountered difficulties with the authorities in Srebrenica, who had robbed them. The authorities sent a delegation to the despot in mid-February 1416, led by Nicola Goze, with instructions to resolve the issue of stolen property, particularly highlighting the cases of Stjepko Pavlović, Živko Ligatić, and Francus Sorgo, whose significant amounts of silver were confiscated by the Srebrenica duke. According to the instructions, Goze was also supposed to address the issue with the metropolitan, who had previously offered his services to Ragusa, and for whom he carried a special letter.[1072] It is not recorded how Goze carried out the tasks he was assigned. Subsequent interventions by the Ragusan authorities indicate that the problem was not resolved but remained present.

In 1417, a new crisis occurred in the relationship between Ragusa and the Despotate, which, due to its border character, also involved Bosnian actors. The conflict erupted over changes in the customs collection system in *Chostireva apresso Svonich*. The deepening of the problem was caused by Stefan's intention to equalize the customs duties in Srebrenica with those in Novo Brdo. The local merchants were ordered not to accept any currency other than the despot's coin. The Ragusan merchants who tried to exchange

[1072] (22. 2. 1416) Lett. di Lev. VII, 148.

their products for other goods were unsuccessful.[1073] This case apparently also caused the intervention of the Bosnian nobility because it involved the state borders of Bosnia and the Despotate. This issue certainly concerned the Dinjičić family. Their territories were adjacent to the despot's, but sources do not provide a more precise description of their involvement. It is only known that Duke Petar exported gunpowder and weapons from Ragusa at that time.[1074] Considering their customs officials as directly responsible for the introduction of taxes in Kostirevo, their authorities gave them a deadline in August 1417 to appear in Ragusa. However, they defended themselves by stating that they were unable to come because they were not allowed to cross Pavlović's territory. In a detailed explanation of their reasons, the Ragusan customs officials in Srebrenica emphasized that Despot Stefan owed some money to Duke Petar and that if they crossed his territory, Petar would collect the despot's debt from them.[1075]

The Ragusans attempted to suppress the despot's actions by using the strongest weapon at their disposal. In mid-August 1417, a new decision was made to prohibit merchants from going to Srebrenica, and a month later, this decision was reaffirmed with the indication that it would remain in effect until the customs issue was resolved.[1076] In September, a decision was made that goods should not be transported to Srebrenica from Zvonik, and penalties were prescribed for merchants who disobeyed the orders.[1077] The

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[1073] (18. 8. 1417) Lett. di Lev. VI, 142v-143. "E li detti dohaneri ne domando mo che voleti da nuy ali quali respondessemo volemo che ne tratteti in gabella de Costiereuo detto Driuagne e in facto de li grossi che ogni vaothurcho e altro homo possa tor denari chomo per lo tempo passato nanno fatto li dicti chabellotti ne resposeno al facto de la moneda et di gabella di Costiereuo ne anno tornado nel primo esser, zoe quello aueano ultra usado al detta gabella de Costiereuo tacto anno promesso a restituit" Ibid., 144.

[1074] (14. 8. 1417) Cons. Rog. I, 77v.

[1075] "El termene de 15 zorni e pizolo non poriamo esser a Ragusi tanto tosto perche la via di Bosna non olsiamo passar de voyuoda Petar perche esserli debito el signor, el debita noy si che in cosa alguna ne aveti colpeueli datene abel termeni che possiamo andar alo signor" Lett. di Lev. VI, 143v.

[1076] Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi", 29. The Ragusan authorities decided to inform their merchants in Zvonik of this decision. (22. 9. 1417) Cons. Rog. I, 79v.

[1077] "mercadanti citadini nostri in Suonich salutem. Perche per nostri mercadanti de Sreberniza semo informadi che in el ditto luogo sono mese algune noue gabelle alla conditione e muodo de Nouaberda

Ragusan customs officials in Kostirevo made promises in September 1417 to revert the customs duties to their previous amount.[1078] Despot Stefan was persistent in his intentions to establish a unified customs system within his state's territory. The Ragusan merchants reported in early November 1417 that the despot had previously stationed officials at the crossings over the Drina River, who directed travelers and merchants towards the Srebrenica crossing. It was also noted at that time that the despot's guards prevented the import of food into Bosnia and that some Vlachs crossed *al perizo de Dragisa zupan e andarno in contrada di Petar voiuoda*.[1079]

In mid-October, the Ragusan authorities addressed their merchants, stating that domestic individuals outside of Srebrenica were allowed to bring goods into the town and trade with them in order to settle their debts to the Ragusans. However, it is not clear how this decision applied to people from territories under the Bosnian crown. Observing the movement of Ragusan merchants between the neighboring towns of Zvonik and Srebrenica, it is evident that Ragusans' understanding of commerce was not hindered by borders. In a letter, the authorities instructed the Ragusan citizens not to pay any additional customs duties on imported goods from the Dinjičić territories or any other territory.[1080] In the letter from mid-October, the Ragusans expressed their concern that due to the new customs policy, many merchants were going to Podvisoki, Podzvonik, or the Despotate. Of

per tanto ne comittemo che perfina che dura le ditte nuoue gabelle nesun Raguseo ouer che per Raguseo se reputa olsa porter algune mercadantie al ditto luogo de Sreberniza i singnificandone che con lui che contra fara cazara in pena de perperi V^{c}" (23. 9. 1417) Lett. di Lev. VI, 140.

1078 Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 66-67.

1079 "e perche sapiate le piu di tri anni che signor despot sil mando certi soi la fagia a aguardar per piu logi nella Drina che non vada victuana in Bossina e acomete chi va a Srebeniza che non lassi ad altro parizo saluo suo … certi Vlachi contrasom al parizo di Dragisa giupan e andardno in contrada di Petar voiuoda" (5. 11. 1417) Lett. di Lev. VI, 155v.

1080 "che quelle mercantie che aueuate in Srebreniça auanti el nostro comandamento quelle possate vendere in Srebrniça non pagando noua dohana et per le contrade de Digniçichi et in ogni altro logo ... Et quello vi debono dare li Schiavi che sonno con le mercantie fora di Srebrniça quelli ponno condure le dicte mercantie in Srebrniça e far denari ouero arzento desse et a vuy satisfar de quelli li vostri pagamenti" Lett. di Lev. VI, 141v. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 55. Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, *Gradska naselja srednjovjekovne bosanske države*, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo 1978, 56.

particular importance is the information about the population structure in Srebrenica at that time, considering Ragusan references to domestic merchants whose ethnicity was expressed through the phrase "Schiavi e Bosegnani."[1081] The Ragusans continued to write about the departure of merchants from Srebrenica to Podzvonik and other places in Bosnia.[1082] They continued to conduct missions related to customs issues in the following period.[1083] The resumption of trade with the Despotate was declared at the end of October 1417.[1084]

In November 1417, the Ragusans sent several delegations to the despot regarding border issues.[1085] Of particular significance is the delegation from November 1417, which had the task of reaching a final settlement with the despot, mentioning to him that after receiving Srebrenica from the Hungarian king, the despot issued a charter that did not include the current conditions. They were supposed to emphasize the previous connections between Ragusa and the Despotate and the merits of the Ragusans in defending some of the despot's territories. Following their visit to the despot, the envoys were to visit the Bosnian king and queen, Sandalj, Petar Dinjičić, and Zlatonosović. Upon their return from Srebrenica, they were to bring with them the old charters of privileges received from the Bosnian kings and Sigismund, and leave copies in Srebrenica.[1086] Although it is not specified what they would

[1081] "E perche signori son certi mercadanti li quali anno creduto a Schiavi et Bossegnani auanti che Radin vene per recoller noua dohana … E per tanto pregemo la vostra signoria vi piacqua de scriuerne se questi mercadanti zoe Schiaui e Bosegnani vegnisse contra tal mercantantia qui in Srebrniça, se olsemo for d'essi nostri mercadanti el nostro pergamento o non … multi mercadanti sonno andati com pagni in Schiauonia li quali sonno per tornar Sotto Suonich et in Souisochi et per altri luogi considerando che li non siano robati" (17. 10. 1417) Lett. di Lev. VI, 146.

[1082] "molti mercadanti Ragusini sono andati di sotto Suonich e di altri logi in Schiavonia con pagni et altre mercadantie e ogni di vano e deno tornar con vitoarie e altre mercadantie Soto Suonich e in altri logi in Bossina e in Srebeniza on olsano fin che dura noua gabella" Lett. di Lev. VI, 155.

[1083] (19. 10. 1417) (21. 10. 1417) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 29.

[1084] (25. 10. 1417) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 30.

[1085] (26. 10. 1417) (3. 11. 1417) (22. 11. 1417) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 30.

[1086] "Et perche semo informati chel pouigle nostre latine et schiaue di Bossina et di Hongaria sono in Srebeniza in man di ser Zuanne di Nicole di Goze, fateuele dare o da lui o da chi li auesse et quelle fate acopiare, le latine in latino et le schiaue in schiauo et le copie lassate alli mercantanti et

discuss with the Bosnian magnates, it seems that it was about getting acquainted regarding discussions with the despot, which were related to customs and crossings.

The resolution of the issues in Srebrenica from 1417 extended into the following year. In February 1418, there were lengthy discussions in the Ragusan councils regarding the dispatch of a delegation to the despot, which finally obtained permission to depart at the end of the month.[1087] A similar scenario unfolded in April when a response was drafted for Despot Stefan.[1088] However, the delegations from the early months of 1418 obviously did not bring a solution to the problem as the Ragusans suspended trade at the beginning of May.[1089] Negotiations continued in a similar atmosphere in the following months. Significant progress in the negotiations between the Ragusans and Lazarević occurred in the last months of 1418. In early October, a decision was passed on free trade with the Despotate, while at the end of December, Ragusan merchants were instructed to pay in the currency desired by the despot in Srebrenica.[1090] Preserved sources do not provide a clear picture of the Bosnian side's participation in the negotiations regarding Srebrenica's customs in 1418. It appears that the resolution of the conflict between Ragusa and the Despotate was conditioned by Ragusans' willingness to concede, and the resolution of problematic issues also included solving the problems with crossings over the Drina, as they were no longer mentioned during this time.

The legal issues concerning Ragusa's obligations to Despot Stefan regarding customs were temporarily resolved. In August 1419, the Ragusan author-

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le autentiche portate con voy et quelle che vi bisognera adoperare et monstrare et voi adoperate et monstrare et al nostro ritorno le portate a Ragusa con voi, a zio che non habiamo briga di cercharle quando bissognesse vederle" (9. 11. 1417) Lett. di Lev. VI, 157v.

[1087] (28. 2. 1418) Cons. Rog. I, 93

[1088] (11. 4. 1418) Cons. Rog. I, 103.

[1089] (4. 5. 1418) Cons. Rog. I, 113v.

[1090] (4. 10. 1418) (30. 12. 1418) Cons. Rog. II, 1, 9. During 1418, the Ragusans sent a large number of envoys to Despot Stefan, which were voted on in the Minor Council. However, the scant documents do not allow a detailed description of their instructions. (24. 2. 1418) (2. 7. 1418) (4. 8. 1418) (23. 8. 1418) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 34, 37, 38, 39.

ities allowed the export of weapons to the ruler of the Despotate, illustrating improved relations between the two states.[1091] In the same month, Ragusan merchants encountered problems in the vicinity of Srebrenica on Bosnian territory, leading to a lawsuit against the Bosnian nobleman Dragiša Dinjičić and his brothers. The Bosnian nobility was sued by a Ragusan citizen named Marin Radosalić, acting as procurator for his brother Luka. According to his statement, Dinjičić's men confiscated a load of cloth from him in the village of Miloševići near Srebrenica in early November 1418.[1092] It is unknown how this lawsuit ended, but thefts and confiscation of property were a regular part of medieval business. In mid-May, the Ragusan count in Srebrenica, Dabiživ Latinica, was also affected. The indictment stated that Latinica's servant Radovac stole a horse intended for his son Dobruško in Srebrenica.[1093] In 1420, the Ottoman presence in Bosnia certainly jeopardized the uninterrupted trading activity with Srebrenica. At the end of January 1420, the Ragusans introduced extraordinary measures to ensure the safety of their caravans traveling through Bosnian territory.[1094] The Ragusan merchants were also being robbed by the despot's men within the territory of the Despotate. At the end of October 1420, the Ragusan authorities sent a delegation with gifts and the task of protesting against stolen silver.[1095] Despite ongoing difficulties, the Ragusans sought to maintain a peaceful situation. Despot Stefan confiscated significant amounts of silver from Ragusan merchants to settle his own claims, to which the Ragusan authorities responded in August 1421, accepting the decision of the Serbian despot.[1096]

In the following period, difficult traffic through the Bosnian gorges and

[1091] (9. 8. 1419) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 55. Kurtović, *Konj*, 262.

[1092] (21. 8. 1419) Lam. de for. IV, 57v. Kurtović, *Ispisi građe za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne (Lamenta de foris)*, 27.

[1093] (19. 5. 1420) Lam. de for. IV, 198. Kurtović, *Ispisi građe za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne (Lamenta de foris)*, 85.

[1094] (31. 1. 1420) Cons. Rog. II, 89v.

[1095] (28. 10. 1420) Cons. Rog. III, 4v. The next month, the Ragusan authorities decided to honor Despot Stefan with gifts worth a thousand perpers, and Đurađ Branković with 600 perpers. (27. 11. 1420) Ibid., 9.

[1096] (2. 8. 1421) Pucić, *Spomenici srpski* I, 158.

conflict in Srebrenica provided a permanent backdrop to events in the town situated on the border between Bosnia and the Despotate. Ragusan authorities halted all trade through the possessions of the nobles Pavlović at the end of February 1421.[1097] A month earlier, a lawsuit was filed in Ragusa against Pavlović's men who had plundered a Ragusan merchant in Borač while he was traveling to Srebrenica.[1098] This case of robbing Ragusan merchants on the way to Srebrenica was not an isolated incident. In March 1424, Radoje Miljković filed a lawsuit for the theft of a sword near Visoko on the route to Srebrenica, where he was transporting goods.[1099] In a letter to their envoy to the despot in November 1421, the Ragusans reported to their merchants about the dangers of the roads through Bosnia.[1100] At the end of 1422, they also wrote to their neighbor in Srebrenica, Duke Vukmir Zlatonosović, stating that their merchants were not free to move around his territory due to the robberies.[1101] In early January 1422, Ragusan merchants found themselves in a dispute with the despot's officials in Srebrenica, prompting the Ragusan authorities to send envoys to the Serbian despot.[1102]

Dinjičićs' activities towards Srebrenica

In the following years, we observe the active involvement of the nobles Dinjičić regarding Srebrenica. In mid-February 1423, a dispute arose

[1097] Kovačević, *Trgovina*, 50.

[1098] (25. 1. 1421) Lam. de for. IV, 281v. Kurtović, *Ispisi građe za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne (Lamenta de foris*), 120.

[1099] "Radoe Milcouich qui heri sero venit de viagio ut dixit coram nobili et sapiente viro domino Rectore ser Marino Pe. de Crieua conqueritur. Eo quia in hoc vere propexacto dum ferret secum in Srebrniza enses quatuor venundandi gratia, tunc prope Visocchi furatus fuit in manibus sibi unus ex dictis ensibus. Qui ensis recognitus fuit in manibus Radiuoy [blank space] mercatoris de Ragusio et Chersoli sociorum" (5. 3. 1424) Lam. de for. V, 270v.

[1100] (12. 11. 1421) Cons. Rog. III, 78.

[1101] "E pregemoui como nostri honori amici e mazor fradelli che li nostri mercadanti ve sian recomadati como in vuy speremo al vegnir e alo andar per le vostre contrade. El don che li darete sonno peze de pagni 4. E fatto questo demorate con li detti zorni cinque cortezandoli como se convien e poy tollerete comrato recomandandoli la terra e li mercadanti como di sopra" (13. 12. 1422) Lett. di Lev. VIII, 138. Živković, "Zlatonosovići," 159.

[1102] (5. 1. 1422) (6. 1. 1422) Cons. Rog. III, 66–66v.

in Podzvonik between the Ragusan, Marin Lucari, and his representatives Thomas Bona and Marin Menze, and Radmil Radušinović, also known as Bonić. According to the indictment, Radmil had previously accused Lucari to Dinjičić while Lucari was in Srebrenica, and allegedly seized his goods and other belongings. The witness was the courier Radiša, and the arbitration of Vukašin Zlatonosović and the despot's Duke Bogdan from Srebrenica was requested to resolve the dispute.[1103] However, the Ragusan documents do not provide further information on the outcome of this dispute.

We observe the nobles Dinjičić involved in another interesting dispute with the Ragusans related to Srebrenica. The appearance of Dinjičićs in connection with Srebrenica in 1424 had not been taken into serious consideration in earlier studies.[1104] In mid-May 1424, a Ragusan named Marin Dersa sued Nicola and Ivan, the sons of Helia Saraca, over customs duties between Zvonik and Srebrenica. Marin had purchased fabrics in Podvisoki, which his servant Miotoš had transported from Zvonik to Srebrenica in April 1423. The mentioned customs officials informed him that he had to pay 50 perpers for the imported goods, which, according to Dersa's testimony, was not lawful. According to his statement, customs duties had never been paid in Srebrenica for fabrics brought from Bosnia, and Marin provided the names of witnesses who would confirm that the fabrics were from Bosnia. From the text of the lawsuit, it can be noted that Dersa had a shop in Srebrenica for which he obtained goods from Ragusa and from merchants in Bosnian territory. However, after he brought the fabrics to Srebrenica from Podvisoki, the customs officer and his men demanded that he pay 50 perpers for the imported goods, contrary to previous rules.[1105] Dersa then traveled to the Ragusan territory in

[1103] (20. 2. 1423) Lam. de for. V, 134v. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 102.

[1104] Ćorović pointed out that Dragiša Dinjičić was in Srebrenica or its surroundings. Ćorović, "Srebrenica za vlade despota Stefana", 73.

[1105] "Marinus de Derxa coram nobili et sapenti viro domino Rectore ser Ursio de Zamagno conqueritur supra ser Nicolam et Johannem fratres et filios quondam ser Helie de Saraca gabelloctos gabelle Srebrnize. Eo quia cum in isto yeme proxime preterito in 1423 Miotos famulus eiusdem Marini venisset de Suonich in Srebreniçam cum una caueza panni zechi, tunc dicti gabellocti dantes auaniam dicto famulo dicti Marini, dicendo quod habebat fraudatam gabellam pro dicto panno illum

Ston for business purposes and later arrived in Podzvonik, where he learned that the mentioned customs officials had campaigned against him with the prefect Dragiša Dinjičić. Consequently, the Ragusan nobleman did not dare to go to Srebrenica and instead appealed to Vukašin Zlatonosović to secure him free passage to Srebrenica. Vukašin did write to Dragiša Dinjičić and sent one of his men.[1106] Dragiša's response to Vukašin, which hints at the subordinate position of Dinjičić towards the Zlatonosović family, has been preserved. However, this did not influence Dragiša to give in to the demands of the Ragusan, whom he was quite angry with. The Bosnian nobleman emphasized that he had received information from Srebrenica customs officials that Dersa had spoken derogatory words about him in Srebrenica, and he requested that the Zlatonosović family reconsider their demands.[1107] This is where the information about this dispute ends.

Examining the influence of the Dinjičićs in the Srebrenica issue requires considering all available sources from that time. In the adopted rules on sending Ragusan envoys from February 1424, among others, envoys for

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pannum acceperunt sibi contra omne debitum jure. Ex quo predicti gabellocti fuerunt ad jus de Srebrniza. Et dum essent in placito tunc dictus Marinus dixit dictus gelloctis si aliquid habetis petere a dicto famulo quia non vaditis ad dominatone Ragusii, qui respondentes dixerunt versus eundem Marinum quid habetis de hoc vos facere aut ad ductum aut ad tortum damus te in penam ciuitati Srebrnize yperperorum quinquaginta, quos idem Marinus constructus fuit ad soluendum et disbursadum. Et etiam conqueritur supra predictos gabelloctos. Eo quia ipsi accusati de mensis aprilis in 1423. acceperunt dicto accusatori unam petiam panni pro dohana pannorum decem emptorum per eundem Marinum in Subtus Visochi a quibusdam Raguseis quem dohana nunquam consueta nec usitata fuit solui per aliquos Raguseos ut plene intendit probare et fidem facere per testes infrascriptos. Qui jam emerunt pannos in Bosina et illos condusserunt in Sreberniçam et nunquam soluerunt aliquam dohanam" (18. 5. 1424) Lam. de for. V, 291. Sima Ćirković, "Udava", *ZFFB* XI-1, Beograd 1970, 350.

[1106] Jireček, *Spomenici srpski*, 75-76.

[1107] "Много почтованомѫ и намь драгомѫ и миломѫ братѫ стариемѫ кнезѫ Вѫкашинѫ и воиводи Вѫкмирѫ wд вашега жѫпана Драгише. Господо, разѫмиҳ што ми писасте за Држића за Мароѣ. Господо, ви сте мени волни заповидити како м(о)ѣ господа. Да мене Дрьжићь срамотно псоваw, то є свидочно цариникомь сребрьеничцимь и свими добрими лѫдми ѫ Сребрьници. Да молимь всь како м(ю) господѫ разгледаите тои, єре не би мене боли чловикь опсоваw, а нека ли Дрьжићь. (И) молимь вашѫ милость разберите тои како є тои. И Бог вась ѫ почтенiю дрьжи вазда" Jelena Mrgić, "Pismo kneza Dragiše Dinjičića knezu Vukašinu i vojvodi Vukmiru Zlatonosoviću", *SSA* 6, Beograd 2007, 203.

places in Bosnia and the Despotate are also mentioned. For the envoys sent to Konjic, Podvisoki, Usora, and Srebrenica, it is stated that they are going to Bosnia, while in Schiavonia they were sent to Danj, Novo Brdo, Priština, and Rudnik.[1108] The information presented will allow the question of ownership over Srebrenica to be explored further. Taking into account the fact that Marin Dersa's dispute lasted from April 1423 to May 1424, we obtain a chronological framework that requires attention. Other sources from this period do not reveal anomalies regarding the rule of the Serbian despot in Srebrenica. During the sale of a house in Srebrenica in early March 1423, the presence of despot's Duke Bogdan was recorded.[1109] Duke Bogdan Staničić was also mentioned in a lawsuit from May 1424. According to this lawsuit, Ivan Saraca, the procurator of Nicola's brother, accused Marin Dersa of bringing Nicola before the Slavic court (*ad jus sclauorum*) in 1423, in the presence of despot's Dukes Radosav Micaljević and Bogdan Staničić.[1110] According to a document from April 1423, Pribio Keganić went from Srebrenica to Despot Stefan regarding some business.[1111] Ragusan authorities

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[1108] "Ordo super electione sive provisione electionum ambassiatorum. E per lo simele quello over quelli che seranno eletti per andare ambassadori in Schiavonia, andando over pagando, non possano esser contra sua volunta uno e mezo. E Schiavonia se intenda el Dagno inver Novomonte, Pristina Rudnich et quelli confini do zornade. Et per lo simile quello over quelli che serano eletti per andar in Bossina, andando over pagando, non possano esser eletti contra soa volunta in alguna ambassada over altro come e detto. Di sopra, per anno uno. E Bosna se intenda oltra Cogniz, Sothvisochi, Usora, Srebinza et alli confini una zornade." (15. 2. 1424) Branislav Nedeljković, *Liber viridis*, SANU, Beograd 1985, 151.

[1109] (1. 3. 1423) Div. Canc. XLVI, 203v.

[1110] "Ser Johannes He. de Saracha procurator ser Nicole eius fratris coram domino Rectore ser Ursio de Zamagno conqueritur supra Marinum de Derxa. Eo quia cum dictus ser Nicola et Marinus habuerunt isto yeme proxime preterito in 1423 aliquam altercationem insimul et questionem tunc dictus Marinus iuit ad accusandum dictum ser Nicola, ad jus sclauorum coram Radossauo Micagleuich et Bogdan Stanicich voiuodis domini despot." (20. 05. 1424) Lam. de for. V, 291v. The potential connection between Srebrenica duke Bogdan Staničić and the Bosnian noble family Stančić was noted in earlier publications. However, due to the lack of sources on this issue, it is difficult to draw more precise conclusions. See: Sima Ćirković, "O ktitoru Kalenića", *Zograf* 24, Beograd 1995, 65.

[1111] "Pribeus Cheganich coram domino Rectore ser Matheo de Gradi comparuit et per suum aduocatum ser Marinum Mi. de Restis exponendo contra Dobruscum Dabisiu Latiniçe: Tu accordasti me in Bosna ut irem ad despotum pro unziis octo argenti et non dedisti mihi nisi duas. Petens predictum

wrote to Despot Stefan regarding certain actions committed in Srebrenica at the end of April 1424.[1112] It is quite evident how sources from this period indicate the stable rule of Despot Stefan over Srebrenica.

It was precisely the Cyrillic letter of Dragiša Dinjičić that led to a discrepancy in understanding the relationship between the Dinjičić nobility and Srebrenica. In the first edition of this letter, without any basis, it was stated that it was written in Srebrenica.[1113] By copying the description from the source by the first editor and imprecisely transcribing the data from Marin Dersa's lawsuit in subsequent editions, it led to the conclusion that prefect Dragiša resided in Srebrenica or in the immediate vicinity of the town.[1114] However, in Marin Dersa's statement, it is precisely stated that he asked Vukašin to arrange free passage to Srebrenica for him. It is not possible to conclude that Dinjičić should have received the Ragusan citizen in the town or allowed him entry into Srebrenica[1115] because he did not have the authority to do so due to the fact that Srebrenica was under the control of the Serbian despot. It is quite certain that it was a permit for free passage through Dragiša Dinjičić's territory. Considering the presented material, the presence of the Dinjičićs in Srebrenica could not be interpreted as a valid possibility. The case of the frightened Ragusan citizen indicates that the Dinjičićs controlled the area around Srebrenica, specifically the area

Rectorem dictum Dobruscum sententiari debere ad sibi dandum dictas unciarum sex argenti. Presente dicto Dobrusco et se scusante: Quod verum est quod ego accordavi ipsum Pribeum tanquam comes Srebrniçe insimul cum meis judicibus pro necessitate illius loci et sic meo nomine nichil habeo agere cum ipso. Replicabat dictus Pribeus: Detur sibi sacramentum qualiter ipse non acordauit me nomine suo proprio. Qui Dobruscus dato primo corporaly sacramento juravit ad sancta Dey evangelia et per suam fidem, quod dictum Pribeum non accordait suo nomine, sed tanquam comes Sebrniçe cum eius judicibus pro necessitatem illius loci ut supra. Unde dictus dominus Rector visis dicta petitione et responsione et sacramento dicti Dobruschi absoluit et liberauit dictum Dobruschum ab eo quod sibi petebatur per dictum Pribeum" (22. 4. 1423) Div. Canc. XLII, 133. Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 802-803. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 15.

[1112] (28. 3. 1424) Cons. Rog. III, 209.

[1113] Jireček, *Spomenici srpski*, 75.

[1114] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 7. Mrgić, "Pismo kneza Dragiše", 202-203.

[1115] Mrgić, "Pismo kneza Dragiše", 202-203.

between Zvonik and Srebrenica, where they likely had their own customs. In a letter from November 1417, reference is made to *parizo de Dragisa zupan* near Srebrenica.[1116] Such events were not particularly rare. In February 1423, Thomas Bona and Marin Menze, acting as representatives of Marin Lucari, filed a lawsuit against Radmio Radusinović for business fraud and counterclaims against Vukašin Zlatonosović, Dragiša Dinjičić, and his brothers in Podzvonik, as well as Duke Bogdan in Srebrenica.[1117] Shortly after the presented dispute, the Ragusan authorities wrote to their subjects in Srebrenica regarding the silver confiscated from Dinjičić,[1118] vividly describing the way in which the Bosnian nobleman earned his income in the vicinity of Srebrenica. Two years later, a robbery of Ragusan citizens in Ljubskovo, in the immediate vicinity of Srebrenica, was reported, involving the theft of goods and money worth around 280 ducats. Dragiša Dinjičić, his son Pokrajac, and a number of Dragiša's courtiers were accused in this case.[1119] Another illustration of Dinjičić's active economic policy towards Srebrenica is seen

[1116] (5. 11. 1417) Lett. di Lev. VI, 155v.

[1117] "Ser Thomas de Bona et ser Marinus Bla. de Menze, tanquam procuratores ser Marini de Lucaris, coram nobili et sapienti viro domino Junio de Georgio honorabili Rectore Ragusii conqueruntur supra Radmium Radusinouich dictum Bonich. Eo quia dum dictus ser Marinus esset Sottosuonich in Usora et peteret dicto Radmio rationes suas eius de quo suus debitor erat, ipse Radmius cepit obiurgari et contumeliam dicere versus dictum ser Marinum et deinde iuit se conquestum comiti Vochazino Slatonosouich et Bocdano voyuode de Sebreniza et zupano Draghisse et eius fratribus de dicto ser Marino. Ob quod dictus zupanus Draghissa et fratres sui predicta decausa miserunt comminatum dicto ser Marino cuius rei causa idem ser Marinus personaliter nec ire nec miterre in Seberniziam ausus est eius merces et res in eius graue et maximum diuinum et priudicium. Et ultra cum dictus Radmius plures requisitus sit ad jus et in jure a pluribus Raguseis. Ipse Radmius semper negauit se fore Raguseum, scilicet, se palam hominem dixit et se fecit scriptoru, Vochazini, Bocdani et zuppani et fratrem." (20. 2. 1423) Lam. de for. V, 134v.

[1118] (26. 10. 1424) Lett. di Lev. IX, 141.

[1119] "Vochus sartor coram nobili et sapienti viro domino Rectore ser Andrea Mar. de Volzo conqueritur supra Dragissam Dinizich et Pocraiaç filium suum et Vladislauum Purti, Radossaum Purti, Braichum Chernich, Braichum Parabutich, omnes ex familia seu curialibus dicti Draghisse et supra Radoye Suaonich conductore ipsius Volchi. Eo quia de mense decembris proxime preterito ipsum Vochum dicti supranominatiin Lubscouo derobauerunt et per vim sibi acceperunt et in suos usus conuerterunt denarios et res et bona ipsius Vochi descripta et annotata in cedula seu folio hic inscripto. Que omnia sunt valloris ducatorum ducentorum octuaginta vel circa" (29. 1. 1426) Lam. de for. VI, 204v.

in an incident from October 1424 when the Bosnian nobleman found himself in a dispute with the Ragusans living in Srebrenica.[1120]

Ибо босьньсции врѣмє полоучьшє тогда подьстоупишє градь сребрьныи глаголємыи: Bosnian attack on Srebrenica in 1425

The Ragusans and the despot's officials in Srebrenica maintained good relations during the first half of 1425. During that time, trade exchanges with Srebrenica via Bosnian territory were not encountering any major difficulties. The Ottomans invaded the Despotate's territory in the autumn, followed shortly thereafter by a Bosnian attack on Srebrenica. The Ottoman attack on the Despotate undoubtedly served the interests of the Bosnians in achieving their plans. However, it is not known if the timing of the attack was directly related to the state of affairs in the despot's territory at that time. According to the writings of Constantine the Philosopher, after the Ottoman forces plundered Kruševac, Despot Stefan managed to negotiate an agreement with them, in which they ceased to threaten his territory. During the Ottoman invasion, Despot Stefan prepared his army to fight against the Ottomans. However, when the Ottoman threat subsided, he directed his forces towards Srebrenica, where the Bosnians were already located. Stefan Lazarević appeared on the Drina River, which the Bosnians believed to be impassable. The despot, however, was able to cross the river with his army on the left bank. According to further accounts from the despot's biographer, the Bosnian army abandoned Srebrenica, leaving behind three cannons. Despot Stefan pursued them into the territory of the Bosnian state, and the Bosnian king, who had taken refuge in one of his towns, sent an envoy in an attempt to negotiate peace.[1121] Constantine the Philosopher's writings can be partially supported by sources of other provenance. However, one must certainly

[1120] (26. 10. 1424) Lett. di Lev. IX, 141.

[1121] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 316-318. For a brief overview of the Bosnian attack on Srebrenica, see: Ćorović, "Srebrenica za vlade despota Stevana", 75. Vukanović, "Srebrnica u srednjem veku", 63-64. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 113-114. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 113.

consider a certain degree of idealization regarding the person being written about, as is characteristic of works of this kind.

The notifications delivered by the Ragsuan diplomats about the events in the Despotate in October 1425 mostly concern the position of their merchants who found themselves in that area. It seems that military activities in the Despotate started at the beginning of October, as the Ragusan authorities allowed Despot Stefan to export large quantities of weapons and issued a cautionary note regarding this order.[1122] On the same day, a decision was made to send letters to all Ragusan citizens and the nobility on the territory of *Sclavonie*.[1123] Alongside permission to export weapons to the Despotate, the Ragusan authorities imposed a strict ban on customs clearance for goods intended for the territories of Despot Stefan and Đurađ Branković.[1124] The Ragusan authorities were unaware of the events in Srebrenica during the first few days of October 1425. The measures taken indicate a delayed response to the Ottoman incursion into the Despotate. This conclusion is based on the fact that numerous Ragusan decisions make no mention of Srebrenica as a place affected by war. Trade with the Branković territories, geographically distant from Srebrenica, was prohibited at that time. This sequence of events is also supported by the writings of Constantine the Philosopher, as the despot's biographer stated that Stefan was primarily preparing his army for war against the Ottomans, later utilizing it against Bosnian forces.

[1122] "de donando domino dispot"; the first proposal was not adopted: "de donando sibi domino dispot balistas viginti quinque fulcitas", but it was instead adopted: "de donando eidem balistas fulcitas viginti"; "de donando etiam dicto domino dispot libras trecentum pulveris ad bombardas necessarie." (9. 10. 1425) Cons. Rog. III, 264; "de donando ultrascripto domino dispot mazios trecentos spaghi pro cordis balistarum"; "de dando libertatem ser Matheo de Gradi et omnibus aliis volentibus quod portare possint siue portari facere ad d. despot arma quecumque offendibilia et defendibilia." Ibid., 264v.

[1123] "de scribendo omnibus nostris civibus tam nobilibus quam popolaribus existentibus in Sclavonie partibus, qui bene se portent in auersitatibus illarum contratarum" (9. 10. 1425) Cons. Rog. III, 264v.

[1124] "Captum fuit de precipiendo dohaneriis dohane maioris quod non faciant dohanam mercatoribus qui vellent ire in contratam domini despothi de Rassia et in contratam domini Georgii Volcouich. Et si fecissent aliquem dohanam hucusque quod precipiant illis mercatoribus quibus tam fecissent dohanam, quod non audeant modo aliquo nec presumant ire in contratam preductorum domini despothi et domini Georgii" (8. 10. 1425) Cons. Minus III, 258.

The first information about the war activities in Srebrenica is mentioned by the Ragusan authorities on the last day of October 1425. According to a newly received letter from Ragusan merchants in Podzvonik, there was a discussion about the captivity of Ragusan citizens in the Srebrenik fortress.[1125] In mid-November, the Ragusan authorities established contact with the Bosnian king, and at the end of the month, there were discussions about news coming from Bosnia.[1126] Just a few days later, a letter from King Tvrtko II arrived in Ragusa. In early December, parallel to receiving the letter from the Bosnian king, the Ragusan authorities decided to write to Duke Vukašin Zlatonosović, seeking a clearer picture of the events there from the Srebrenica neighbor. At the same time, the sending of the letter to Despot Stefan was postponed.[1127] In the first half of December, however, it was decided to send a letter to the Serbian despot and the Ragusan merchants in the Despotate.[1128] The parallel sending of letters to Duke Vukašin and Despot Stefan also reflected on the interpretation of the quality of their mutual relations.[1129] Despite the presented Ragusan activities, there is a lack of significant indicators regarding the events in Srebrenica.

At the beginning of the following year, 1426, from the perspective of the Ragusans, it appears that there were signs of the situation being resolved in Bosnia and the Despotate. In mid-January 1426, the Ragusan authorities allowed trade with Bosnia and the Despotate through Zeta, but travel to

[1125] "de deliberando super littera nuper recepta a nobilibus et mercatoribus Ragusinis de Subsuonich pro nobilibus et mercatoribus obsessis in castro Srebrnich"; "de induciando super predictis usque ad primam responsionem habendam a dictis nobilibus et mercatoribus." (31. 10. 1425) Cons. Rog. III, 267v.

[1126] (16. 11. 1425) Cons. Rog. III, 270. "de induciando super factis novitatum Bosne, pro quibus arengatum est in presenti consilio, usque ad prima nova que inde habebuntur et venient" (24. 11. 1425) Ibid., 271.

[1127] "de induciando usque prima noua supra responsione futura ad literam habitam a rege Bosne comminatoriam"; "scribendi voivode Volcassino Slatonossovich"; The proposal was not adopted: "de scribendo domino dispotho de Rassia super his que dicta sunt in presenti consilio", but this one was adopted: "de induciando super eisdem usqe ad prima noua" (3. 12. 1425) Cons. Rog. III, 271.

[1128] (10. 12. 1425) Cons. Rog. III, 272.

[1129] Živković, "Zlatonosovići", 158.

Srebrenica remained prohibited.[1130] In early April 1426, the Ragusans discussed correspondence with Despot Stefan and Srebrenica's Duke Bogdan.[1131] At the end of July 1426, Despot Stefan issued a document to the Venetians confirming the peace treaty *in descensu nostro Zreberniza*.[1132] During this period, there is no information available regarding further battles between the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot in Srebrenica.

More detailed information about the events in Srebrenica from the autumn of 1425 is derived from a later letter from the Ragusan authorities to the Bosnian king, Tvrtko II. In mid-April 1428, the authorities composed a response to Tvrtko II, who complained about the Ragusans' involvement in the defense of Srebrenica and the damages caused by the Ragusan merchants on that occasion. The Ragusans defended themselves, stating that their merchants were not responsible for the damages amounting to 10,000 ducats, as estimated by Tvrtko II. They emphasized that their merchants did not defend Despot Stefan but had withdrawn to the Srebrenica fortress to protect their own lives. According to their account, in the attack by the subjects of the Bosnian crown, the Dinjičić nobles, who had burned down Srebrenica, suffered damages that would not be compensated even with 50,000 ducats.[1133] This information covers all the known facts regarding the war between King Tvrtko II and Despot Stefan. The presented facts indicate that the Bosnian army attacked Srebrenica in the second half of October 1425, with the forces of the Bosnian king and Dragiša Dinjičić managing to enter the town, causing the population to retreat to the Srebrenik

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[1130] "de franchando mercatores nostros quod cum eorum mercanciis ire possint in Sclauoniam per viam Zente."; "de franchando scriptis nostris mercatoribus viam Bosne et Sclauonie excepto quod ire non possint Srebrnizam." (18. 1. 1426) Cons. Rog. III, 279.

[1131] "de induciando supra responsione danda litere domini despothi usque quo responsionem habebimus del Srebrniza a Bogdano voiuoda et ab aliis mercatoribus Ragusinis ibidem"; "scribendi voiuode Bogdano et aliis mercatoribus Ragusinis in Srebrniza prout ipsis domino Rectori et minori consilo videbitur" (3. 4. 1426) Cons. Rog. III, 294.

[1132] (25. 7. 1426) Ljubić, *Listine* IX, 17-18.

[1133] (19. 4. 1428) Lett. di Lev. X, 85-86. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 58. Ćorović, "Srebrenica za vlade despota Stevana", 77. Vukanović, "Srebrnica u srednjem veku", 66-67. Dinić, "Srebrenik", 362-363.

fortress. During the attack, Srebrenica was burned, and the account provided by Constantine the Philosopher, although unconfirmed by other sources, suggests that the Bosnian army withdrew due to the despot's counterattack, leading to a reconciliation.

The failure of the Bosnian king to conquer Srebrenica and increase state revenues through profits from the Srebrenica mines led to the establishment of a new tax that contradicted previous customs and rules. This new tax was imposed on the transportation of silver through Bosnian territory, affecting Ragusans' silver trade from Srebrenica, as well as other places such as Novo Brdo, Rudnik, and Trepča. It was common practice to confiscate silver that did not bear the king's seal as a sign of paid duties. Despite numerous complaints from Ragusa, King Tvrtko II persisted in his intentions to secure additional funds.[1134]

The Bosnians towards the conflict between Despot Stefan and the Ragusans in Srebrenica in 1427

The involvement of the Bosnian nobility is also recorded in the events in Srebrenica in the first half of 1427. The despot's biographer informs us about the events in Srebrenica in 1427, writing that Despot Stefan sought revenge against the people of Srebrenica due to the murder of the local official and that he regretted it afterward. However, there is no other source to support the potential remorse of Despot Stefan for the harm caused to the Ragusans.[1135] The capture and killing of the Ragusans in Srebrenica was also mentioned by Mavro Orbini, who states that the murdered nobleman was

[1134] For the more detailed overview of Tvrtko's customs policy regarding silver trading, see: Milan Ivanović, "Prilozi za istoriju carina u srednjevekovnim srpskim državama", *Spomenik* SAN XCVII, Beograd 1948, 47. Desanka Kovačević, "Razvoj i organizacija carina u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni", *GID BiH* VI, Sarajevo 1954, 246-247. Kovačević, *Trgovina*, 46-47, 52-53, 103, 105. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 125, 128, 134. Andrija Veselinović, "Carinski sistem u Srbiji u doba Despotovine", *IG* 1-2, Beograd 1984, 19. Bogumil Hrabak, "Dubrovčani u Ugarskoj i njihove veze sa Beogradom i Srbijom (1300-1541)", *GGB* XXVII, Beograd 1980, 62.

[1135] Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof", 318.

named Vladislav, but incorrectly places the event in 1419.[1136] The problems between the Ragusans and the despot's authorities in Srebrenica began no later than the beginning of March 1427, when discussions were held in Ragusa regarding the sending of envoys to the despot.[1137] There were also cases of the Ragusans being imprisoned. In mid-April, envoys were sent to Despot Stefan with the task of negotiating reconciliation and the release of the imprisoned merchants. The authorities suggested in the instructions that the despot's men had shamefully imprisoned the Ragusans, which they considered a personal insult. They emphasized the innocence of their people who sought refuge in the Srebrenica churches and fortress and demanded their release. The envoys were also supposed to visit Đurađ Branković to express gratitude for his intervention, without which they would have suffered even greater damage, and accordingly rewarded him with fabrics. The same envoys were supposed to visit Vukac, Sandalj, Radoslav, and Kovač Dinjičić to request the return of goods and the release of the merchants.[1138] Due to the scarce information available, it is difficult to establish a parallel between the attack on Srebrenica in 1425 and the claims from the Dinjičić family. However, such a scenario remains plausible considering that the discussion with Tvrtko II regarding the damages lasted for another year. Ragusan envoys failed to achieve their intended objectives in April. There were envoys present at the despot's court in May 1427, but he refused to receive them.

[1136] Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 107-108. Luccari also mentions this event and places it in the year 1423. Lvccari, *Copioso*, 87.

[1137] "scribendi domino dispoth pro et occaxione contra in literis receptis a nobilibus et mercatoribus de Srebrniza" (9. 3. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 15. "de induciando supra factis zeche de Srebrniza pro quibus habitus est sermo et arengatum in presenti consilio" (15. 3. 1427) Ibid., 15v.

[1138] "Se al vostro andare o ritornare voi ve auicinasse a meça zornata a voiuoda Sandagl o a voiuoda Radossauo o a conte Vocaç et voi vi voltate da loro et presentando la lettera credença salutategli per nostra honoreuolemente … Perche Couaç Digniçich a tolto alli nostri mercatandi noue salme di panni et merçe et a legati li homini che ierano con le dicte salme pero se per caso voi retrouerete con esso Chouaç vogliamo che per nostra parte lo dobiate salutare come al lui conuiene … vogla fare restituire et rendere le dicte salme et relaxar li homini che fu ligati come della sua amitiçia fermamente speremo" (16. 4. 1427) Lett. di Lev. X, 14v. The Ragusans wrote about the conflict with the despot in Srebrenica and the plundering and imprisonment of the Ragusan merchants by the Serbian despot in April 1428. (19. 4. 1428) Ibid., 85-86.

In late May, the authorities suggested to the envoys to check whether Sandalj's envoy had advocated for him at Despot Stefan.[1139] The following month, the Ragusans continued their unsuccessful attempts to negotiate the release of the merchants, whom they characterized as poor. In mid-June, the Ragusans resorted to their established method of repression by suspending trade with the Despotate.[1140] Further sources do not shed light on Duke Sandalj's role in the situation in Srebrenica. Despot Stefan remained inflexible and did not agree to reconciliation until his death. Therefore, it appears that even Sandalj's envoys could not help the Ragusans.

Changes in the relations between Ragusa and the Despotate occurred with the accession to the power of Đurađ Branković in the Despotate, to whom the Ragusans addressed from the beginning of August 1427.[1141] By the end of the year, disputes in Srebrenica were finally resolved. Trade with the Despotate was reestablished at the end of November, and in mid-December 1427, they decided to write to the despot, informing him that he and his wife were free to come to Ragusa.[1142] The Ragusan decision to allow Despot Đurađ's arrival in Ragusa was a direct response to Đurađ's charter, in which he confirmed the privileges of the Ragusans.[1143] The change in rulers in the Despotate did not mean the end of the difficulties faced by Ragusan merchants in Srebrenica in the long term.[1144] In October 1429, the Ragusan authorities were once again forced to write to Despot Đurađ regarding the restitution of Ragusan residents' confiscated property in Srebrenica.[1145] Changes in customs operations in the Bosnian territory also

[1139] "E perche ne direte che lo ambasador de voiuoda Sandagl venne al signor despoth el qual ve dixe a vuy o a ser Volzo de Babalio che luy haueua pregato lo signor despoth per li nostri prezioneri per tanto mettetene aspiar e asauer tutto zo che pori supra de questa e quello poi hauere nel dete asaueri" (30. 5. 1427) Lett. di Lev. X, 20v.

[1140] (13. 6. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 27. Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi", 31.

[1141] (1. 8. 1427) (14. 8. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 31v, 33.

[1142] (28. 11. 1427) (16. 12. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 41, 41v.

[1143] (13. 12. 1427) Pavle Karano-Tvrtković, *Srbski spomenici*, Beograd 1840, 178-182. Miklosich, *Monumenta*, 352-355. Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 11-21.

[1144] (16. 6. 1429) Lett. di Lev. X, 67v.

[1145] (3. 10. 1429) Lett. di Lev. X, 78v. (5. 10. 1429) Cons. Rog. IV, 118.

complicated the economic situation in Srebrenica.[1146] In June 1428, through appeals to the Bosnian king, the Ragusans sought to secure more favorable conditions for transporting silver from Srebrenica and Zvonik across Bosnian territory.[1147]

[1146] "due lettere le qual abiamo ricepute da li mercadanti nostri de Srebrniza et de Sotto Visochi, per li doni sforzadi liqual li vien tolti da qualli de Sandagl segondo che se possuto auer informacion vi mandemo incluse a questa vogliando che segondo vedereti per esse et cognoscereti esser di bisogno dobiate parlar et dare informacione sopra çio al detto voiuoda Sandagl pregandolo instantamente per parte nostra che voglia dar remedio et bon modo et ordeno che questi doni sforzadi cessino et piu auanti non siano tolti ne per li suo gabelloti alle ditte gabelle alcuna cosa oltra lo usato fatto ne inouato come nella sua magnificiencia speremo" (16. 6. 1429) Lett. di Lev. X, 67.

[1147] "Ma anchora li argenti che vien di Suonich et di Srebrniza et d' altre parti passa per lo suo paese accio che tucto vegna con pericolo della vita et dello auere" (1. 6. 1428) Lett. di Lev. X, 88v.

Srebrenica in the 1430s

The consequences of the Konavle War between Duke Radoslav and Ragusa also affected trade with Srebrenica. With the suspension of trade through the territory of Pavlović at the beginning of military conflicts in mid-1430, the silver mining center in Srebrenica temporarily became inaccessible to Ragusan merchants. In addition to these issues, during 1430, the Ragusans living in Srebrenica encountered new difficulties regarding the Srebrenica customs, prompting them to address the local authorities and Despot Đurađ.[1148] At that time, Srebrenica was governed by Despot's Duke Bogdan, who is mentioned in a contract for the sale of a house in Srebrenica drawn up in August 1430.[1149]

Tvrtko II's closure of roads caused the Ragusans to be unable to trade with Srebrenica, resulting in financial damage. The authorities sought to use the Zeta road as an alternative solution for trade with the Despotate. However, this option was not favorable for the transportation of goods to distant Srebrenica.[1150] After negotiations with Duke Sandalj, the Ragusan authorities issued permits to their merchants in late September and early October of 1431, allowing them to travel with caravans to Srebrenica through the Kosača possessions. However, Srebrenica and Zvonik were excluded from this decision (*exceptando tamen ab hoc illos de Srebrniza et Suonich*).[1151]

[1148] "scribendi gabellotis Srebrnize pro nouzis quod ultra solitum et quam hactenus factum fuerit per alios habellotos nullam nouitatem facere debeant et omnem nouitatem ultra solitum per eos factam in nouitatam debeant reuocare penitus alias" (5. 9. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 229v. "de induciando supra literis mercatorum qui conqueruntur supra gabellotos Srebrnize pro nouizis et etiam ipsorum gabellotorum" (6. 10. 1430) Ibid., 240. "scribendi literas domino dispotto Georgio et mercatoribus Srebernize prout sibi videbitur pro duanis positis ultra solitum" (8. 6. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 12.

[1149] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 105.

[1150] (29. 8. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 223. "de franchando mercatores nostros quid ire possint per viam Zente in Sclauoniam cum mercanciis" (15. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 39v.

[1151] (26. 9. 1431) Cons. Rog V, 37. (1. 10. 1431) Ibid., 37.

A proposal was adopted in the Senate to send a letter to King Tvrtko II, requesting permission for their merchants to travel with goods to Srebrenica.[1152] The Bosnian king did not relent in the economic blockade of the Despotate, prompting the Ragusan authorities to once again seek permission for their merchants' passage in mid-October 1431.[1153] The Ragusans were busy dealing with Srebrenica at this time. In addition to the discussions with the Bosnian king, parallel correspondence was conducted with Despot Đurađ regarding the issue of the currency imposed by customs officials in Srebrenica, leading the Ragusan authorities to introduce a ban and monetary penalty for those who would give silver to the mint.[1154]

The lack of security on the roads through Bosnia towards Srebrenica persisted in the following years due to the military conflict between King Tvrtko II and Despot Đurađ, which took place in the immediate vicinity of Srebrenica. In March 1432, a Ragusan caravan traveling towards Srebrenica through the territory of Duke Sandalj was robbed at Buna.[1155] Ragusan authorities occasionally issued permits to caravans traveling to Srebrenica despite the robberies.[1156] After the conflict with the Bosnian king ended, Despot Đurađ arrived in Srebrenica no later than mid-July 1433, where he addressed a charter to Hungary.[1157] The Ragusans, who had their per-

[1152] "scribendi domino regi Bosne recommittendo sibi mercatores nostros et quod permittere velit eos transire et ire in suis mercancis in Srebrenizam" (1. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 37v.

[1153] "de induciando ad consulendum super literis regis Bosne lectis in presenti consilio super fracto franchi et mercanciarum non mittendarum in Sclauonia quibus non dabit transitum" (12. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 39v. "de deliberando super mittendo ambaxiariam nostram ad domini regem Bosne" (15. 10. 1431) Ibid., 40.

[1154] "scribendi domino dispot Sclauonie pro lamento monetarum que sunt in Srebrniza de quibus grauantur mercatores nostri. Et similiter scribendi et ponendi penam mercatoribus nostris qui dant argenti in zecha nominatis in litteris mercatorum inde lectis in presenti consilio et aliis qui repperieruntur argentum in zecham" (6. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 39. "Habiando nuy anuto informatione da li citadini e mercadanti nostri sono di la in Srebrniza come per vuy e per raxon e disfetto vostro di la vien fatto bater moneta e per voiuoda Bogdan a Radoslau Zanzich gabelloti in Srebrniza la liga di la qual moneta tiene IIII^{0} di rame per liura" (7. 10. 1431) Lett. di Lev. XI, 55v. (7. 10. 1431) Ibid., 56.

[1155] (17. 3. 1432) Lam. de for. IX, 19v.

[1156] (14. 7. 1432) Cons. Minus V, 210v.

[1157] (19. 7. 1433) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 95.

manent envoys in Srebrenica at that time, sought to exploit Đurađ's stay in Srebrenica in the following months. Trying to improve the status of their merchants, who suffered frequent material damages, the Ragusan authorities, through several letters in July and August, presented the difficulties their subjects encountered in Srebrenica to the despot.[1158] Upon his return to Smederevo, Đurađ advised the Ragusan authorities at the beginning of October 1433, through the mentioned envoys, to clearly identify their subjects, in order to prevent certain *Bossignani e Rasiani* from taking advantage of the privileges granted to the Ragusans.[1159] This information indicates the mixture of Bosnian, Serbian, and Ragusan population in Srebrenica, which is quite understandable considering that the authorities in this place had changed two decades earlier and that Ragusan merchants had been coming to Srebrenica for decades.

The negotiations between the Ragusan authorities and the despot regarding the situation in Srebrenica during the summer of 1433 did not leave a significant impact on the position of their citizens. Toward the beginning of 1435, the residents of Srebrenica complained about the new customs officer, Yusuf, who was introducing changes to local business practices. The authorities' response was to impose a ban on exporting goods to Srebrenica and seek help from King Sigismund and Matko Talovac.[1160] King Tvrtko II and Despot Đurađ were present at the court in Buda during this time period. The imposition of the import ban into Srebrenica is illustrated by data on caravans traveling towards Srebrenica. However, due to the imposed ban, merchants were instructed to unload their goods in Borač.[1161] The Ragusan

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[1158] (15. 7. 1433) (25. 8. 1433) (27. 8. 1433) (8. 8. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 156v-158v, 159-159v, 160, 160v.

[1159] "Per lo agreuar afatto el signor dispothi con vuy de voler cognoscer quali sono Ragusey e quali non et sofur non puo che alguni Bossignani e Rasiani siano per Ragusey tratadi" (1. 10. 1433) Lett. di Lev. XI, 165v.

[1160] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 325. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 81, 84. Vukanović, "Srebrnica u srednjem veku", 69.

[1161] "Et fazandoui risposta al bisogno prima assai lal' demo la prouision bona aueti fatta com pena che mercantia non si faça di la. Et anche se di qua vegnesse condutta fosse scaricata sotto Borazo, azo che non se intra nella gabella ne se pagi dohana schiaua." (21. 2. 1435) Lett. di Lev. XI, 219v. "Dele

authorities warned Đurađ that such changes were inconsistent with the old rules enjoyed by their subjects in Srebrenica since the time of Bosnian rule.[1162] During this time, the road to Srebrenica through Bosnia was not safe either. At the end of March 1435, a lawsuit was filed against the castellan Vladislav Mrđenović, a vassal of Stjepan Vukčić, who allegedly plundered a caravan traveling towards Srebrenica in Sutjeska at the Vratar fortress. The theft involved silver worth about 10,000 ducats.[1163] The dispute between the Republic and the despot continued until mid-1435 when, in early July, the Ragusan authorities highlighted a new threat to the inhabitants of Srebrenica, manifested through the contamination of the area caused by ore smelting.[1164] During July and August, the Ragusan authorities wrote to the Serbian despot again to inquire about the customs for Srebrenica, emphasizing that his territory and Srebrenica were both part of Bosnia and on the border with Bosnia, and that such duties did not exist previously, as well as the fact that their merchants did not pay higher customs duties in any place within the territory of Bosnia, citing examples such as Podvisoki, Deževice, Fojnica, and Kreševo.[1165] However, the Ragusan arguments did not have a

mercantie sono sotto Borac et altroe sul viazo domandati esser declariti se quelle podeti portar in Schiauonia ouer altroe. Vedemo asaper che contenti siamo tuti li mercadanti ano panni merce e altre mercantie, tanto sotto Boraz quanto in zascadun altro luogo quelle e qualle possano portar ouer mandar in Schiauonia et in zascaduna [231v] altra parte alor piasera, saluo cha in Srebrniza et alli luogi a Srebrniza circumuicini doue esta fatta questa nouita de gabella azio non se sotto poniamo ala detta noua gabella ne a quella as entir paremo [232]" (2. 4. 1435) Ibid., 231v-232. Konstantin Jireček, *Trgovački drumovi i rudnici Srbije i Bosne u srednjem vijeku*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo 1951, 126.

[1162] "Considerando çio esser non solamente contra le antiche usanze et costumi de li mercadanti, ma etiam dio contra le promesse fatte al nostro serenissimo signore imperatore de Romani et Re de Ongaria etc. dil qual siando Srebrniza e recomandadola prima a signori Bosignani, volse e cusi promesso et observato li suo che ali mercadanti Ragusei fidelissimi suoi douesse esser seruate e mantenute le antiche usanze sue" (21. 2. 1435) Lett. di Lev. XI, 220.

[1163] (23. 5. 1435) Div. Canc. XLIX, 48v. Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 1030-1031. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 17.

[1164] Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 28.

[1165] "voleuase far pagar noua gabella et parezo le qual tute cose exano innouate contra le antiche usanze, francheze et libertade fatte et seruate alli mercadanti per li signori Bossignani e per lo serenissimo signor nostro detto e signor dispot Stefano al qual fo data per lo detto nostro signor" (8. 7. 1435) Lett. di Lev. XI, 252. "Signore la magnificentia vostra di e considerare che e quella vostra

positive effect on resolving the situation, nor did the generous gifts sent to the court in Smederevo help them.[1166] The Ragusan authorities were unable to negotiate the abolition of the new duties for Srebrenica during the last months of 1435 in spite of extensive efforts.[1167]

In early 1436, the Ragusan authorities decided to exert even stronger diplomatic pressure on the Serbian despot regarding the introduction of new duties in Srebrenica. Their envoys during January and February emphasized to the despot that the situation in Srebrenica was deteriorating day by day, with merchants increasingly abandoning the place, and their authorities demanding the suspension of the new measures.[1168] As their situation did not improve, the Ragusan authorities continued with their delegations. In mid-April 1436, by once again highlighting irregularities regarding customs, they pointed out that the despot's actions regarding the introduction of new duties could cause even greater damage to the Republic due to the fear that Bosnian magnates might follow Đurađ's example and introduce similar changes.[1169] By mid-1437, the Ragusan authorities had information that Ban Matko Talovac was planning to meet with the despot, and they pleaded with him to intervene and restore the previous status for their merchants in Srebrenica as before, when Srebrenica was part of the Bosnian state.[1170] This principle was presented to King Albert of Hungary in May 1438. The Ragusan authorities informed their sovereign through a

terra e logo de Srebrniza e in Bosna et ali confini de Bosna et tutte le terre et mercadi de Bosna li circumicini tanto chia fosse per ruda quanto chi non come sono Soto Visochi, Deseuize [266] Coyniza, Cresseuo et pui altri luogi tutti sono liberi et franchi et senza tal dohane [266v]" (28. 8. 1435) Ibid., 266-266v

[1166] (28. 5. 1435) Cons. Rog. V, 281v.

[1167] (25. 9. 1435) (25. 10. 1435) Lett. di Lev. XI, 270v-271v, 273v-274v.

[1168] (15. 1. 1436) (28. 2. 1436) Lett. di Lev. XII, 6-7v, 12v-14v.

[1169] "nouitade fata in Srebrniza, veda et cognosamo la magnificencia vostra quando senestio interuegna alli mercadanti pero che li signori Bosignani al dando che nouita de gabelle per la signoria vostra e fatta in Srebrniza, il qual mercado se intende esser nello Regnamo de Bosna sono mouesti essi signori Bosignani ancora a far inouicion et innouar gabelle nel loro mercadi e contrade" (15. 4. 1436) Lett. di Lev. XII, 22.

[1170] Radonić, *Akta i povelje* I/1, 408. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 83.

letter that the status of their merchants in Srebrenica had been violated, where old rules and privileges they had inherited from the time when Srebrenica was part of the Bosnian state were not being respected.[1171] Despite appeals to neighboring rulers and the nobility, the Ragusan dispute with the despot over the Srebrenica customs remained unresolved due to the Ottoman conquest of the Despotate in 1439, when Ottoman rule was established in Srebrenica.

[1171] "Et di piu li direti: Come e noo a la magnificencia soa noi abiamo piu volte scrito et ricorso a la benevolencia soa sopra li fati di Sreberniza, la qual e tuto lo fato di Ragusa, perche siando tratadi li nostri merchadanti di la segondo le antiche usanze prime, zoe quando era sotto Bosna, senza innovacion de gabelle, risguardava ogni bene et utile di Ragusa per i trafichi se facevano" (15. 5. 1438) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 418.

The period of the fall of the Despotate (1439-1444)

As a result of the Ottoman conquest of the Despotate, Srebrenica came under the control of the Ottoman Empire. A precise chronological reconstruction of events from 1439 and 1440 is not possible due to the scarcity of sources. The first records indicating Ottoman rule over Srebrenica date back to July 1440 when a decision was made in Ragusa to send a letter to the Ottoman official in charge of Srebrenica.[1172] In the preceding months, the Ragusan authorities had imposed restrictions on their merchants traveling to Srebrenica and informed their subjects of the new measures implemented in the region, but without a clear indication of ownership over the place.[1173] In July 1440, King Tvrtko II complained to the Ragusan authorities about the actions of their merchants in Srebrenica.[1174] The Ragusans didn't have much luck even with the Ottoman officials in Srebrenica. In mid-August, the authorities responded to the merchants in Srebrenica who had complained about issues with customs, cautioning them about the challenging times that had arisen.[1175] Soon after, another letter was sent from Ragusa addressed to the merchants in Srebrenica, clearly indicating that the Ragusan authorities did not possess the means to obstruct the new duties established by the Ottoman officials, advising their subjects not to lease customs from the Ottomans.[1176] Significant activities were undertaken in early September when the authorities advised the local merchants to send an envoy to the Porte to lodge a complaint against the Turk Pintininus (Pinti Junus), who was providing advice on the joint lease

[1172] (6. 7. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 175.

[1173] (21. 4. 1440) (23. 6. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 150v, 172v. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 74.

[1174] (20. 7. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 178.

[1175] (9. 8. 1440) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 453. (10. 8. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 193, 194.

[1176] (16. 8. 1440) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 454. (18. 8. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 195-195v.

of customs.[1177] The Ottoman officials did not pay excessive attention to the merchants' complaints, so at the end of November, the authorities sent a letter to the customs officer Pinti Junus, prohibiting their merchants from bringing goods and money into Srebrenica.[1178] The Ragusan authorities sent envoys to the sultan, to express gratitude to the Ottomans for their treatment of the Ragusans. Furthermore, they were supposed to request an investigation into the activities of their official in Srebrenica, Pinti Junus, whom they accused of implementing a customs collection system that was inconsistent with previous business practices.[1179] Despite the accusations, some Ragusans in Srebrenica continued to engage in a joint venture regarding the lease of customs with the accused Ottoman official.[1180]

Ragusan activities in Edirne provoked the sultan's decision to capture their merchants in the territories of Bosnia, Despotate, and Srebrenica because the envoys from December 1440 did not bring tribute to the sultan. The Ragusans were informed of these events through a letter written by their envoys in Edirne at the end of January 1441. The response from the Ragusan authorities contained instructions emphasizing the need to advocate for the release of the imprisoned merchants and file a complaint, as such actions

[1177] "como dela grauamento che fadi sopra Giucho Braychouich raçionello et Pasqual de Marota li quali parsiano andati ala Porta del Turcho et abiano con loi sugestion uno Turcho chiamato Pintininus a comprar de conpagnia le gabelle predicte dal imperator Turcho con noue usanze che non forno per auanti in tempo del signor dispoto Stephano. E de piu segondo el nostro scriuer par che anche Bencho Bratosalich habia parte in la detta conpagnia" (3. 9. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 196bis.

[1178] (30. 11. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 203v. Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi", 33.

[1179] "chome essi suoy merchadanti sono bene visti et humanamente tratadi per tuti li paysi et tegnire della soa signoria excepto che in Strebreniza … [213v] … Et apresso per che segondo sapete molte nouitade et deuasamenti vien fatte alli merchadanti nostri de Strebreniza per Pynti Junus gabelloto perho vi comettemo che auanti che parotiati della presentia delli detti signori del audientia quando vi parera luogo te tempo debiati in spetialiter de allor dire ragreuarui et allor vien dati et fatte molte nouitade et deuasamenti nel fatto delle gabelle li qual sono tegnude per nome del detto Pyntiunus pregando instantamente le lor signorie che se degnano et dare modo et ordine che per parte della mayestade dello imperador vegna expressamente comandato et acomesso che li merchadanti nostri nel detto luogo de Streberniza siano humanamente tratadi et bene visti et che nel schuodi delle dette gabelle siano tratadi segondo che al tempo del signor despotto Steffano se usaua [217]" Lett. di Lev. XII, 213v, 217.

[1180] (3. 12. 1440) (6. 12. 1440) Lett. di Lev. XII, 209v, 210.

were not in line with the privileges granted to them by the sultan immediately after the conquest of Smederevo.[1181] In the following month, the Ragusans presented the issues faced by their merchants in Srebrenica to Petar Talovac, pleading for his assistance.[1182] During Ottoman rule over the Despotate, the situation was unfavorable even in the vicinity of Srebrenica. In a secret mission sent from Srebrenica to Duke Radoslav Pavlović, the Ragusan authorities recommended their merchants.[1183] They wrote that Ottoman commanders who were arresting their subjects in Srebrenica were carrying out the same actions on his territory.[1184] Despite the danger, the Ragusans in Srebrenica moved between Srebrenica and Borač during this time.[1185]

As part of their efforts to ensure the safety of their subjects in Srebrenica, the Ragusans imposed a prohibition on merchants traveling to Bosnia and the Despotate in mid-March 1441.[1186] Throughout the year, the Ragusan authorities issued permits for their subjects to travel to Srebrenica on several occasions, but the ban on carrying goods remained in effect.[1187]In

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[1181] "tuti li mercadanti nostri tanto de Schiauonia et de Streberniza quanto per lo simel dela Bossina et de Romania sono stati ligati per li Turchi … Et etiamdio quelli che la mayestade soa troandossi Sotto Smedreuo in lo acquisi nouamente della Schiauonia a fatto et concesso alli mercadanti nostri de Streberniza" (22. 3. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 16.

[1182] (19. 4. 1441) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 433.

[1183] "Ser Michael Zoane de Volzo … ambaxiator electo per andar de Sreberniza a voyuoda Radossauo … non dando a sapere a persona viuente vi dobiate partir … dal detto vayuoda Radosauo … Et vuy leuando lo cumiato et recomandando la nostra mercadanti" (31. 1. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 6.

[1184] "Auendo la mia signoria de Ragusa ultimadamente receputa una vostra lettera nella quale li significate che lo Turcho lo qual aueua intromesso li merchadanti nostri de Streberniza poy disceeso et vegnuto nel tegnire della vostra signoria et aueua intromesso per lo simel li mercadanti nostri et il lor ance li quali satrouaueno nel vostro tegnire et quelli recomandati nelle man voster la mia signoria assay se maraueglia de tal scriuer vostro et maxime che tale nouitade abiati consentudo che vegnano facte alli merchadanti nostri nel tegnire dela vostra signoria" (22. 3. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 18.

[1185] "Captum fuit quod ser Michael de Volzio existens in Streberniza ab illiuc iret debeat ad Borazum ad vayuodam Radossaum ad faciendum sicut sibi comissum fuit pro nostro dominio" (19. 1. 1441) Cons. Minus VIII, 227.

[1186] (16. 3. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 217v.

[1187] (18. 4. 1441) (6. 5. 1441) (11. 5. 1441) Cons. Minus VIII, 246v, 247, 251, 252. (8. 7. 1441) (31. 7. 1441) (24. 8. 1441) (4. 9. 1441) (30. 9. 1441) (7. 11. 1441) (21. 11. 1441) (29. 11. 1441) Cons. Minus IX, 3, 10v, 16v, 21, 25, 34, 36v, 39. (23. 3. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 244v, 245. (2. 4. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 113v.

addition to Srebrenica, special permits were also issued for the Ragusans to travel to Podborač and Višegrad as border towns.[1188] The decision to permit the departure of Damian Sorgo's servant in June 1441 stands out, as it was specifically mentioned that the permit was granted for the purpose of conducting business with Duke Petar Kovačević in Srebrenica.[1189] This source illustrates that during Ottoman rule over Srebrenica, the Bosnian nobleman continued to engage in business with the Ragusans living in that area.

The dispute between the Republic and Ottoman officials in Srebrenica remained unresolved. Through their envoys, the authorities attempted to persuade the sultan's pasha in the European part of the Empire to support Ragusa and order their commanders to release the merchants who had been arrested within the territory of the Despotate and other areas under Ottoman control.[1190] In early October 1441, the Ragusans requested the Ottoman authorities to send an envoy to Srebrenica to assess the situation and verify the actions of their officials.[1191] However, the sultan and pashas disregarded Ragusa's demands due to the Republic's continued refusal to pay the annual tribute. By the end of 1441, the authorities attempted to improve the position of their merchants by sending gifts to the sultan and pashas.[1192] The situation in the Despotate and Srebrenica finally started to improve after an agreement was reached between the Ottomans and Ragusa in February 1442.[1193] All Ragusans were informed of this news by the end of April 1442.[1194] Duke Petar Dinjičić (Kovačević) provided undisclosed assistance

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1188 (2. 5. 1441) Cons. Minus VIII, 250.

1189 "de concedendo Michoz famulo ser Damiani de Sorgo quia ire possit ad voiuodam Petar in Srebernizam pro certis suis agendis non portando secum aliquam mercantiam vel auere" (27. 6. 1441) Cons. Minus IX, 1.

1190 (2. 8. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 38v.

1191 (2. 10. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 48v.

1192 (15. 12. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 55-56.

1193 Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 232-234. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 91-92.

1194 (28. 4. 1442) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 73v.

to Ragusan merchants from Srebrenica, which prompted the Ragusan authorities to express their gratitude to him in a letter dated August 1442.[1195]

The agreement with the Ottomans and the temporary improvement in the position of merchants in Srebrenica did not last long. In early 1443, the Ragusan authorities once again sent their envoy to the Porte, who was to remind the sultan and commanders of the previous year's agreement and request that written prohibitions be issued in Srebrenica and other places under Ottoman rule where their merchants resided. However, this mission was unsuccessful.[1196] By early 1444 at the latest, Srebrenica once again came under the authority of Despot Đurađ. Duke Petar Kovačević, who provided assistance to Đurađ in the fight against the Ottomans, was also associated with the establishment of the despot's authority in Srebrenica. According to incomplete Ragusan records, Đurađ's control over Srebrenica could be traced back to the beginning of December 1443, as indicated by a letter from the Ragusan authorities addressed to the Hungarian ruler, stating that their merchants from Srebrenica and Rudnik had visited the despot's military camp.[1197] According to a complaint from February 1444, it was revealed that three Ragusans had leased the customs from the despot. However, upon receiving news that Đurađ had headed to Hungary, Pavko Stipašinović took money and silver from these merchants and expelled them out of the customs office.[1198] Stipašinović's lawsuit filed in March 1444 stated that he was sent by the despot to collect customs duties. However, some merchants reported him to Duke Petar, who imprisoned Stipašinović, claiming that Pavko wanted to collect customs duties for the Turks and was disloyal to the despot. As a

[1195] "scribendi voyuode Petar Dinicich regratiando sibi de bono eius portamento quod fecit erga nostros mercatores et de recomittendo ei ipsos mercati ac de respondendo littere mercatorum nostrorum Srebernize lecte in presenti consilio prout ipsi domino Rectori et consilio videbitur" (4. 8. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 158v.

[1196] (12. 1. 1443) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 99-99v.

[1197] (9. 12. 1443) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 447.

[1198] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 76.

result, his horses were also confiscated.[1199] The problematic situation in Srebrenica prompted the Ragusan authorities to instruct their merchants in early February 1444 that the authorities did not want them to transport goods to Srebrenica.[1200] At the end of February, the proposal for Ragusan nobleman Johanes Goze to send cloths to the despot, which he would export from Srebrenica, was not adopted.[1201] The permit prohibiting the transport of goods to Bosnia and Srebrenica was voted on in mid-March. A few days later, however, the merchants were granted permission to travel to Srebrenica.[1202] It is apparent from the limited information available that the authority over Srebrenica was complex between the despot and Duke Petar at the beginning of 1444. According to earlier interpretations, the presence of Duke Petar in Srebrenica was explained by the assumption that Despot Đurađ entrusted control of Srebrenica to Duke Petar as a reward for his military assistance in the fight against the Ottomans.[1203] During this time, the Srebrenik fortress remained in Ottoman possession. It is possible that this fact was the reason behind Duke Petar's request, sent to Ragusa at the end of February, for permission to hire a bombardier.[1204]

In accordance with the agreement to join the war against the Ottomans, King Tvrtko II occupied the Srebrenik fortress no later than mid-May 1444, thereby bringing Srebrenica under Bosnian rule. An envoy of the Bosnian

[1199] "Procuratores Pauchi Stipasinouich, videlicet, Gabriel de Prato et Dobruschus de Latiniza coram domino Rectore ser Michaele de Bucignolo fecerunt lamentum supra dohanerios Strebenize, videlicet, Costadinum et Ziuchum Razonelum et Pierchum, Tunchum et Bernabam filios Stani de Illia, dicentes quod despot miserat ipsum Paucham ad exigendum gabellas Strebenize et scripserat quod sibi responderetur de dohanis et ipsi gabelloti iuerunt ad vaiuodam Petar Couacich et accusiuint ipsum dicentes quod ipse Pauchus volebat exigere gabellas per Teucris et quod non erat fidelis despoti et dederunt ipsum infidelitatem et facerunt ipsum ligare et fecerunt sibi acipere equos ad eo quod stetit in maximo periculo sue persone. Quare cum hoc fuerit contra honore suum et in magnum detrimentum suum petierunt ipsi Paucho subueniri de remedio oportuno" (28. 3. 1443) Lam. de for. XVII, 234. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 76.

[1200] (8. 2. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 17.

[1201] (28. 2. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 24.

[1202] (12. 3. 1444) (17. 3. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 28v, 30.

[1203] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 76.

[1204] (28. 2. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 23v.

king was in Ragusa in mid-May, and upon delivering news of the change in ownership of Srebrenik, he was rewarded by the Ragusan authorities.[1205] Despite the establishment of the Bosnian authority in Srebrenica, the Ragusans continue to have problems with local customs. In early August, the authorities instructed their envoys at King Tomaš to insist on the abolition of new customs duties, rectify injustices inflicted upon their subjects, and file a complaint regarding the confiscation of silver from their merchants.[1206] The dispute between King Tomaš and the Ragusans regarding Srebrenica continued in the following months. This is evident from a decision made by the Ragusan council in November 1444, where it was decided to send a letter to the merchants in Srebrenica due to the Bosnian king's complaint against them. Tomaš exerted pressure on the Ragusans, while the authorities instructed their subjects to work towards reconciliation with the Bosnian king.[1207]

During the change of ownership over Srebrenica in mid-1444, the routes through Bosnia towards this highly significant mining center were not safe due to both Ottoman forces and Bosnian nobles who stopped Ragusan caravans in order to compensate for damage caused by other Ragusan citizens. Lawsuits were filed for the robberies committed in Srebrenica.[1208] Robberies also occurred in the immediate vicinity of Srebrenica, such as the robbery that took place in March 1445 near Perin on the territory of Stančić.[1209] A Ragusan merchant Kostadin from Srebrenica was robbed in

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[1205] (20. 5. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 51v. (22. 5. 1444) Cons. Maius VII, 178.

[1206] "Apresso al fato dele nouitade vien fate alli merchadanti nostri de Streberniza sopra della qual chosa dite auer parelato alla prefata maiestade la qual ve ha resposo che de zio vole auer bona information et poy fara quello se conuegnera ve dissemo che quanto sapete et potete debiate attender de impetrar dalla deta maiestade che le dette nouitade siano lenate via et chelli deti merchadanti nostri siano tratadi segondo che per la comission vostra a pieno ve stato deto et acomesso" (4. 8. 1444) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 155.

[1207] (26. 11. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 94v.

[1208] (20. 4. 1443) Lam. de for. XVI, 187. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica* 56.

[1209] "Giurchus de Mileta et Martinus Franchouich tamquam procuratori Gregorrii Grubaceuich ut asseruit coram domino Rectore ser Vita de Restis fecit lamentum supra Ziuanum filium Maroe Siraç, dicens quod dum essent Subtus Perin dictus Ziuanus dixit quod ipse Gregorius est homo despoti propter quod sint captus et ligatus et fuit sibi accepta una salma pannorum per Tuertchum vaiuoda

April 1444 in Foča by the Ottomans who claimed that he was a despot's customs officer, but he managed to escape by bribing Ottoman officials.[1210] Duke Stjepan also participated in the confiscation of silver from Srebrenica, and his subjects robbed Mihailo Galvan *in Sutiesca Sub Vratar* in November 1444.[1211] In February 1445, the Ragusan authorities specifically complained to the Kosača family about the confiscation of silver from their merchants in Srebrenica.[1212]

Stancich et Gasparum eius fratrem et habuit alia damna multa et amisit etiam unum equm. Quare etc." (11. 3. 1445) Lam. de for. XIX, 37v.

[1210] "Laurentius Martoli de Goze coram domino Rectore ser Nicola de Menze fecit lamentum supra Costadinum et Jaxam auruficem Xec, dicens quod veniente ipso Costadino Ragusium, Nicola filius ipsius Laurentii consignauit ipsi Costadino Subtus Giurgeuaç in unis bisaciis libras quinquaginta-octo argenti de Strebeniza ut portaret ipsum argentum ipsi Laurentio et veniens ipse Costadinus quoniam fuit in Coza fuit data certa auania ipsi Costadino per Teucros et ipse Costadinu timens de dictus Teucris recomendauit ipsum argentum in dictis bisaciis dicto Jaxe Xeç et Mathias fanto ipsorum de Goze qui veniebat cum ipso Costadino. Et postea ipse Costadinus pro timore Teucrorum aufugit et venit Ragusium sine ipso argento" (14. 4. 1444) Lam. de for. XVII, 248. Below: "Die XVII aprilis … Nicola filius dicti Laurencii recommdauit sibi Matihias eius fantum cum unis bisaciis in quibus dictus Nicola dicebat esse pecias XI argenti, VI pecias argenti crudi et V dini, dicens quod ipse Mathias deberet venire secum et sic ipse Teucros, dicentes quod fuerat gabellotus despoti et quod fugiebat et volebant sibi accipere dictum argentum et equos et ligare eum et ipse Costadinus misit ipsum Mathias cum dictis bisaciis ad Jaxam Xeç, et tunc ipse simoniauit duos Teucros ut promitterent eum recedere et non fuit auxus portare sua secum et recessit et venit Ragusium dimittens ipsum Mathias ad dictum Jaxam qui autem postea secutum fuit de dicto argento dicit se nescire, scilicet, quod usque ad Cozam scit bene quod nihil deficit" (17. 4. 1444) Ibid.

[1211] (10. 11. 1444) Lam. de for. XVIII, 76v. Kovačević, *Trgovina*, 169-170. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 46.

[1212] "E cusi con piacuoli raxonamente de amore e di alegreza scorando et passando con esso vereti con bela manera et tempo a tocharli de li nouitadi fate ali nostri mercadanti. Et primamente sopra el fato de li arzenti tolti alli anostri mercadanti de Sreberniza" Lett. di Lev. XIII, 164.

Frequent changes of power in Srebrenica (1445-1459)

By regaining control over the Despotate and reconciling with Duke Stjepan Vukčić, Despot Đurađ Branković established a solid foundation for addressing the issue of Srebrenica. In mid-April, an envoy of King Tomaš stayed in Ragusa. In accordance with his visit, it was decided to write to the merchants in Srebrenica, urging them not to interfere in local affairs.[1213] Considering the subsequent change of power in Srebrenica, it is possible that a conflict between the Bosnian and Serbian rulers was taking place at that time.[1214] If a conflict did occur between Tomaš and Đurađ during this period, it did not last long, as the Bosnian king soon launched a campaign against Kosača. In the following months, the Ragusans encountered transit problems through Bosnia to Srebrenica once again. In late June, the authorities issued a prohibition for merchants from Srebrenica to send silver and other goods through the territory of Duke Stjepan.[1215] By September 1445, Đurađ's authority in Srebrenica was already evident. In the middle of the month, Despot Đurađ confirmed the privileges for Srebrenica that the Ragusans had enjoyed during the reign of Despot Stefan.[1216] Available sources do not provide detailed information about this change of power in Srebrenica.

Despot Đurađ's rule over Srebrenica did not last long. There is insufficient information in the sources to reconstruct the takeover of Srebrenica

[1213] "de dando libertatem domino Rectori et suo paruo consilio respondendi ambaxiatorum domini regis Bossine prout arengatum est in presenti consilio. Et etiam scribendi mercatores nostros de Strebrnize quod se impedire non debeant de factis dictorum sed tamen attendere eorum mercancis" (14. 4. 1445) Cons. Rog. IX, 144.

[1214] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 77.

[1215] "scribendi mercatoribus Bosne et Srebernize nostris Ragusinis quod se retineri et abstinere debeant in mittendo aut portando argentum Ragusi per teritorium et tenutas voyuode Stiepani et similiter auere de capsa donec aliud superinde scriptum fuit per nostrum dominium" (25. 6. 1445) Cons. Rog. IX, 166.

[1216] (17. 9. 1445) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 30-32. Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, 239. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 22.

by King Tomaš. The earliest indication of his authority over the town dates back to the beginning of July 1446 when the Ragusans there received a reprimand from their authorities for negotiating with the Bosnian king regarding the lease of the Srebrenica customs and mint.[1217] At the time of Srebrenica's conquest, Tomaš had a good relationship with Duke Petar Kovačević, who had apparently been involved in previous arrangements with the despot regarding the governance of Srebrenica.[1218] By August, information was available in Ragusa that Tomaš had introduced new customs duties, prompting the Ragusan authorities to decide to write to the king and their merchants in Srebrenica.[1219] The Ragusans advised their subjects to choose envoys that would request the king to repeal the introduced changes, and if Tomaš did not agree, they were to threaten to suspend trade with Srebrenica.[1220] The issues regarding customs duties were not resolved in the autumn when the Ragusan authorities decided to write to the merchants and respond to a certain Simko Bogavčić regarding the Srebrenica

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[1217] "sono informati che essendo dela apresso del deto Re te mancho vignesti dela alli presentia del deto Re el qual intesino che vignesti com uno scritto per parte de voy tre azcechare de comprare la dohana della zecha del deto Re per fare che algune monete nostre de d'altre parte non podesseno corce ne esser spendute per lo teritorio del prefato Re" (4. 7. 1446) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 193.

[1218] In mid-August, Duke Petar was also mentioned in Tomaš's charter to the Dragišić family. (21. 8. 1446) Miklosich, *Monumenta*, 440.

[1219] "scribendi domino regi Bosine super nouitatis factis in gabella Strebernize" (20. 8. 1446) Cons. Rog. X, 21v. "alli nobili et saui zentilhomini et altri prouidi Ragusey nostri li quali tegnete la gabella della zecha de Streberniza semo auixati che essendo voy stato per parte vostra alla mayestade de Re de Bosina tornaseno portando lettere del prefato Re comandando alli vaoturchi che ogni uno delli vauturchi debia tore denari in gabella de Re et che tuti li argenti li quali se fuora in Streberniza che se portano in gabella" (24. 8. 1446) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 213v.

[1220] "Et alla sua exellentia con quello bono modo che meglio saperano per parte de voy mercadanti dolce et rachiamare se debiano delle dette nouitade fate in la deta gabella digando et narando tale ne simile nouitade may prima del tempo passato non esser fate. Et chome la soa exelentia piu fiate ha promesso et deto valerin conseruare et mantegnir nelle franchitie che sono state per tiempi passati. Et questo oltertanto per li soy priuilegi fati alla nostra signoria hauer confirmato tute le franchitie et bone usanze che auante per lo passato sono state fate et seruate alli mercadanti nostri" (24. 8. 1446) Lett. di Lev. 212v. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 77-78. A letter with similar content was sent to Pavko Stipašinović at the same time. (24. 8. 1446) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 213bis.

customs.[1221] Further correspondence with merchants in Srebrenica continued in mid-October 1446.[1222]

Srebrenica's business situation was further complicated by the division of customs revenues between King Tomaš and Despot Đurađ. There are no details available regarding this division. The first indication of this practice comes from the lawsuit filed by the despot's customs officer, a Ragusan citizen named Gunko Računat, who accused the Srebrenica count Pavko Stipašinović of robbing him at the customs office in early April 1447.[1223] Alongside the despot's officials, Tomaš's men were also present in Srebrenica, overseeing the operation of the customs. Towards the end of December, a certain Count Mikleuš, Count of Srebrenica, Pavko Stipašinović, and all the Srebrenica burghers were presented as loyalists of the Bosnian king.[1224] Preserved examples of coins bearing the name of King Tomaš on the obverse and the name of Despot Đurađ on the reverse have motivated researchers to explain the origins of these coins as a result of the division of revenues from the Srebrenica customs between these rulers, counterfeiting of one ruler's money by the other, or the mixing of molds in the mint.[1225] During this time, the routes to Srebrenica through Bosnia were still not completely safe. Duke Stjepan continued to enforce the system of collecting debts from

[1221] "de dando libertatem domino Rectori et suo minori consilio scribendi mercatoribus nostris Srebernize et rescribendi Simcho Bogaucich ad literam eius scriptam nostro dominio super facti gabellarum Srebernize prout arengatum fuit in presenti consilio" (18. 9. 1446) Cons. Rog. X, 28v.

[1222] (13. 10. 1446) Cons. Rog. X, 38.

[1223] "Giuchus Razunat coram domino Rectore ser Thoma de Sorgo fecit lamentum supra Pauchum Stipasinouich comitem Strebenice dicens quod ipse venit supra ipsum Giuchum existentem gabellotum despoti in Strebeniza in domo gabelle cum burgesanis Strebenize et per uni acepit sibi cum dictis burgesanis totum suum auere, videlicet libris LXXXIII argenti fini in tribus peciis, item grossorum in cassa libris XXV et de chicis que veniunt in dohanam libris 37 ..." (8. 4. 1447) Lam. de for. XXI, 42. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 78.

[1224] "Славнемь и велможнкмь племенитои и мѫдрои гѡспѡдѣ владѫцагѡ града Дѫбровника, господинѫ конслѫ и нкговемь сѫдыамь слѫге и послѫшници гѡсподина краља босанскога и гѡспоства ви кнезь Миклевшь и кнезь Павко Стипашиновикь и сви пѫрьгарьк срьебрьничци многѡ поклонение" (28. 12. 1447) Jireček, *Spomenici srpski*, 86.

[1225] Regarding this money, see the earlier literature: Amer Sulejmanagić, "Novac podložnika bosanskih vladara", *Numizmatičke vijesti* 66, Zagreb 2013, 69-75.

the Ragusan merchants by intercepting their caravans. In line with that, one caravan was stopped in August 1447, and the issue with Kosača was only resolved by the Ragusan authorities after extensive correspondence.[1226]

The division of customs in Srebrenica between Tomaš and Đurađ is documented throughout the year 1448. In late May 1448, the Ragusan authorities wrote to King Tomaš regarding the new regulations imposed on their subjects in Srebrenica.[1227] During that time, Tomaš's protovestiyar Restoje was present in Srebrenica and attempted to introduce these new regulations that the residents of Srebrenica complained about. It involved an order for the Ragusans to build houses in Srebrenik and to supply them with weapons, to which the Ragusan authorities sent a letter to the merchants for the king, complaining about Restoje and reminding him of previous times when such rules were not in force.[1228] Simultaneously, a letter was sent to the Srebrenica merchants.[1229] These were undoubtedly significant changes because in early June, the authorities decided to write to Duke Petar Dinjičić (Kovačević),

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1226 (26. 8. 1447) (4. 9. 1447) Cons. Rog. X, 120v, 122. "venne ad audientia ala signoria de Ragusa como de vostro comadamento era stato intromesso et tolto ne le tegnute de la signoria vostra certi arzenti de nostri zentilomeni et mercadanti li quali vegniuano portati segondo l'usado de Sreberniza a Ragusa. Unde non credendo la detta signoria esser i lucro poy sucesse che la vostra magnificentia scusse per soe lettere a la prefato signoria como la verita era che aueni fato togliere li detti arzenti, per la qual cosa asay e mazor admirantione prende et dolese et a maucha essa signoria dela vostra magnificentia" (15. 9. 1447) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 241v. The Ragusans sent requests the next month as well: "restitution de li arzenti tolti" (13. 10. 1447) Ibid., 243.

1227 (26. 5. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 196v. (26. 5. 1448) Cons. Minus XI, 201. (26. 5. 1448) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 541.

1228 "Heri rezeuessimo vostra lettera fata della alle XX del presente per la qual fossimo auisati delle nouitade ve sono fate per lo prothobistiario Restoie per parte della maiestade del Re de Bossina et por lo simel forno per voy date allo deto prothouistario Restoie le qual comendemo esser assay prudentemente fate … Anzi quando le interuegnuto alguno caso della suspetione della guerra quelli de lor li quali ano vogliuto redirsi nel castello de Strebernich allor e stato dato a posser intrare et stare. Et altri la quali non hano vogliuto redirsi in esso castello se sempre alloro e stato dato a posersi liberamente andare doue al loro e stato de piasere et contentamento perche li merchadanti per rispeto delle utilitade che rendano alli luoghi dou conuersano in ogni luogo et parte del mondo sono humanamente tratadi et sono liberi de andare et stare done allor paiuse" (19. 6. 1448) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 261v.

1229 (27. 5. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 197.

recommending their own merchants to him.[1230] At the same time, Ragusan subjects were prohibited from leasing a portion of the customs that belonged to the despot.[1231] It is evident that an agreement was made regarding the division of customs in Srebrenica between the Bosnian and Serbian rulers, while the power in Srebrenica was in the hands of King Tomaš. A confusing situation arose, which sources followed with varying intensity. The rule of the Bosnian king over Srebrenica was also noted in late July 1448, when the Ragusan authorities wrote to the merchants in Srebrenica regarding issues with Tomaš's demands.[1232] By the end of July, the situation in Srebrenica and its surroundings remained calm, and during those days, the Ragusan authorities advised one of their diplomatic missions heading to Smederevo that they could travel *per viam Srebernize*.[1233]

As relations in Bosnia changed during the spring of 1448, a rift developed between Tomaš and Duke Stjepan, who reconciled with the despot. Đurađ took advantage of these changes and, according to the Serbian chronicler, had already taken over Srebrenica by mid-September 1448 at the latest.[1234] The military conflict over Srebrenica began no later than mid-August. This chronological reference is provided by the Venetian provveditore from Shkodra, who informed his authorities about the activities of the despot's son in Zeta and mentioned the war in which the Bosnian king was involved.[1235] In this clash with King Tomaš, Despot Đurađ had the Ottomans and the support

[1230] "de dando libertatem domino Rectori et suo minori consilio scribendi voyuode Petar Dignicich et sibi recomittendo mercatores nostros prout arengatum fuit in presenti consilio" (3. 6. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 199.

[1231] "de rescribendo et reitrando mercatoribus nostris in Sereberniza existentis et commorantibus literas quas pridie sibi scripsimus super facto nouitatum de quibus arrengatum fuit in presenti consilio"; "de vetando mercatoribus et ciuibus nostris commorantibus in Srebreniza quod se impedire non debeant de parte gabelle Srebernize spectante domino dispoto, donec aliud superinde habebunt in mandatis a nostro dominio" (3. 6. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 199.

[1232] (24. 7. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 212v.

[1233] (30. 7. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 214v.

[1234] (16. 9. 1448) Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 235-236.

[1235] "et bello etiam quo cum serenissimo Rege Bossine implicitus est." Valentini, *Acta Albaniae Veneta* III/XX, 58-61.

of Duke Stjepan on his side, and the Ragusans reminded them of Duke Stjepan's role in these events several years later.[1236] With the establishment of the despot's authority in Srebrenica, Thomas Kantakuzenos took the lead, and the Ragusans addressed him in mid-October 1448 regarding the implementation of their earlier privileges from the time of Despot Stefan.[1237] Ragusan merchants continued to face ongoing issues with transit through Bosnian territory. In January 1449, an attack occurred on a servant of a Ragusan citizen in the customs office in Borač, while he was transporting goods to Srebrenica.[1238]

The rule of the Serbian despot over Srebrenica, following its conquest in September 1448, lasted only a few months. Sources do not indicate a renewed conflict between the two rulers at the beginning of 1449. The first indication of Tomaš's renewed authority over Srebrenica dates back to March 1449 when the Ragusans discussed sending a letter to the Bosnian king, Pavko Stipašinović, and the merchants in Srebrenica regarding the ores.[1239] At the same time, a response was sent to the merchants, suggesting that Tomaš's officials were present in Srebrenica and, together with Stipašinović, were confiscating ores from debtors.[1240] Echoes of the previous battles between Tomaš and

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1236 Lett. di Lev. XV, 172. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 513.

1237 "Perche questi rezeuessimo vostra lettera nella qual tra altre ve lamentaui sopra de Zugno Zelubinouich dicendo che hauenolo voy achonzato et otegnuto com lo signor Thoma cognato dello illustre signor despoto el qual dela in pe del deto signore despoto chel li merchadanti Ragusey in fato delli pagamenti delle gabelle et dohane de Strebreniza fosseno tratadi con li modi patti et condition ch'erano antigamente nel tempo del signor despoto Vochio" (15. 10. 1448) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 272. (15. 10. 1448) Ibid., 272v.

1238 Kovačević-Kojić, *Gradska naselja*, 96. Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, "Borač-središte zemlje Pavlovića", in: *Zemlja Pavlovića-Srednji vijek i period turske vladavine*, 54.

1239 Proposals not adopted: "de faciendo tres ad formandum literas scribendas (crossed out: regi Bosine) et Paucho Stiepasinouich et mercatoribus Strebeniçe pro facto querelle facte per mercatores nostros pro rudis"; "de scribendo Regi Bosne pro querellis factis per mercatores nostros pro rudis", but this proposal was adopted: "de scribendo Paucho Stiepasinouich et mercatoribus Striebenice pro facto querelle facte per mercatoribus Strebenice" (1. 3. 1449) Cons. Rog. XI, 46v. "de induciando supra literas habitis de Strebernіza et a Paucho Stipasinouich usque ad prima noua habenda de illis partibus." (19. 3. 1449) Ibid., 54.

1240 "come vui insiema cun alcuni valiosi del Re seti venuto nouamente in Strebreniza haueti intromessi li debitori et tolte tute le rude de li mercadanti nostri. Et quelle rude fate lauore per lo Re in gran dano et prezudisio delli deti merchadanti nostri la qual cosa se cossi e molto ne despiaxe" (1. 3. 1449)

Đurađ over Srebrenica can be found in a complaint filed by the Bosnian king in early May 1449, addressing Ragusan authorities regarding their nobleman and despot's *čelnik*, Damian Georgio.[1241] A few days later, the authorities approached Georgio, conveying Tomaš's complaints. Exploiting the conflict between Bosnia and the Despotate, Georgio ransomed the captured Bosnian nobleman Radoje Ljubanić (*uno zentilomo per nome Radoe Bubanich*) and demanded a much larger sum for his release after the war, for which he was reprimanded by the Ragusans.[1242]

During June 1449, at the Hungarian assembly in the presence of the Bosnian king and Despot Đurađ, a proposed solution to the conflict between the two rulers was presented, primarily concerning Srebrenica as an endless source of dispute between the two states.[1243] Even though political conditions in the region at the time necessitated an agreement due to Ottoman threat, it was not reached on this occasion. Sources continue to record the reign of King Tomaš over Srebrenica throughout 1450. Duke Petar Dinjičić represented Tomaš's interests in Srebrenica during this period. The position of the Ragusans in Srebrenica fluctuated over time. Having control over the territory around Srebrenica, Kovačević engaged in a dispute with the Ragusan authorities during March and April 1450 regarding the actions of his subjects in Jadar. The authorities insisted on the restitution of confiscated

Lett. di Lev. XIV, 8v. At the same time, a letter was sent to merchants in Srebrenica with similar content. (1. 3. 1449) Ibid., 9.

[1241] "de respondendo litere regis Bosine scripte dominationi super facto ser Damiani Ju. de Georgio et de scribendo ser Damiano"; "de faciendo tres qui formare debeant ipsas literas scribendas regi Bosine et ser Damiano" (5. 5. 1449) Cons. Rog. XI, 68v.

[1242] "de firmando literam que dirigitur ser Damiano de Georgio pro facto Radoe Bubanich lectam in presenti consilo" (10. 5. 1449) Cons. Rog. XI, 71. "dizando che essendo preso ne la bataia to tra le zente soe et quelle de lo illustre signor despoto uno zintilomo per nome Radoe Bubanich pare che despoi vui lo habiate rescomprato et doue vui dite hauer sborsato ducati L^{ta}. Benche anchora la soa maiestade non sia certa ne creda che tanti siano niente de mancho pare che vui domandate ducati CC se lo douete lassar" (12. 5. 1449) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 15v.

[1243] Jireček, *Istorija Srba* I, 374. Radonić, *Zapadna Evropa*, 262. Perojević, "Stjepan Tomaš Ostojić", 518. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 317.

silver and money.[1244] At the same time, a prohibition was imposed on Ragusan merchants from bringing goods into Srebrenica.[1245] It seems that this situation did not greatly disrupt business, as by mid-April, Ragusan citizens were already expressing gratitude to Dinjičić for his actions.[1246] Soon after, the arrival of merchants with goods in Srebrenica was permitted again.[1247] The limited decisions of the Ragusan council regarding their correspondence with Duke Petar indicate that Bosnian authority over Srebrenica remained intact in the following months.[1248] Indications of Kovačević's role in governing Srebrenica are also found in later Ottoman kanun for Srebrenica, which state that it was a law enacted by Duke Kovač.[1249]

Alongside the usual disputes in Srebrenica, the aforementioned correspondence between King Tomaš and the Ragusan authorities regarding the strained relations between Bosnia and the Despotate was taking place. The issues pertaining to Srebrenica's ownership were framed in 1450 within the wider context of the Ottoman problem. The situation was rapidly changing. While Tomaš expected a war between Bosnia and the Despotate to break out in April 1451, just two months later, negotiations for reconciliation between the neighbors were being conducted through the mediation of the Ragusans. In mid-June, the Ragusan authorities proposed to Tomaš that the point of contention between him and the despot, concerning the fortress of Srebrenik, be temporarily handed over to Ragusa while negotiations were ongoing. If an agreement could not be reached, the Republic would

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1244 "de mutuando danificatis per valiosum Petar Couacheuich apud Jadar ducatos sexaginta dantibus ipsis prius pignus sufficiens in camera auri aut argenti de restituendo ipsos comuni nostro de primis denaris qui recuperabuntur de damno habito" (19. 3. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 169v. (16. 4. 1450) Cons. Minus XII, 153.

1245 (19. 3. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 170.

1246 (18. 4. 1450) Cons. Rog XI, 181.

1247 (27. 5. 1450) (5. 6. 1450) (20. 6. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 197v, 201v, 208.

1248 (27. 5. 1450) (5. 6. 1450) (20. 6. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 197v, 201v, 208.

1249 Branislav Đurđev, "Da li je poznati rudarski zakon despota Stefana važio i za Srebrenicu?", in: *Radovi sa simpozijuma Rudarstvo i metalurgija Bosne i Hercegovine od prahistorije do početka XX vijeka*, Muzej grada Zenice, Zenica 1999, 213.

return the disputed place to the Bosnian king.[1250] Tomaš's decision to engage in negotiations with the despot for reconciliation must be seen in light of Đurađ's position with the sultan, as he posed the greatest threat to the Bosnian king. An agreement was reached no later than the end of July 1451, when Ragusan subjects from Smederevo sent a letter to their authorities. The Ragusans had sent gifts to Smederevo, and according to the established diplomatic protocol, they expressed delight over the despot's assumption of Srebrenik.[1251] In November 1451, Despot Đurađ managed to secure a confirmation from Sultan Mehmed II recognizing his possessions in Bosnia, including Srebrenica.[1252]

Despot Đurađ's rule over Srebrenica lasted until the end of his reign over the Despotate. During this time, the Ragusans maintained contact with the Bosnian king and the nobility in Srebrenica. Due to the ongoing war between the Republic and Herzog Stjepan, the authorities informed their merchants in Srebrenica about these events at the end of October 1451.[1253] In February 1453, a dispute arose between King Tomaš and the Srebrenica count Pavle Stipašinović regarding the payment of customs duties in Srebrenica, which had previously been leased by a Ragusan citizen. The dispute was partially resolved in 1454 when Stipašinović included certain amounts of silver for King Tomaš in his will.[1254] In December 1453, the Ragusans in Srebrenica engaged in a dispute with Duke Tvrtko Stančić over confiscated money that had been sent from Srebrenica to Ragusa through

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[1250] "de dando libertatem domino Rectori et eius minori consilio possendi declarare in comissione ambassiatorum pro facto castri de Streberinich" (17. 6. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 81v. (17. 6. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XV, 1-4. Dinić, "Srebrenik", 358-359.

[1251] (13. 8. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XV, 138-139. (12. 8. 1451) (13. 8. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 119v, 121. Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 514-517 (with the wrong date). Dinić, *Iz dubrovačkog arhiva* III, 203-204.

[1252] Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 319.

[1253] (28. 10. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 160.

[1254] (21. 2. 1453) (28. 5. 1453) (4. 6. 1453) (12. 6. 1453) (14. 6. 1453) (21. 7. 1453) (25. 8. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 157, 198, 200v, 203v, 205v, 216v, 231. (24. 8. 1453) Veselinović, *Malo veće,* 588. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 86.

his territory.[1255] At the end of 1454, the despot entrusted the administration of Srebrenica to Duke Brajan, to whom he reported in October about the victory of his and Hunyadi's army over the Ottomans.[1256] During this time, trade transport to Srebrenica through Bosnia was once again hindered. In early November, the Ragusan authorities suspended the departure of merchants to Srebrenica through Herzog Stjepan's territory and warned local merchants not to return to Ragusa via that route under the threat of punishment.[1257] The restricted traffic through Bosnia due to Ottoman orders to arrest Ragusan merchants continued in 1455, when special permits were issued for travel to Srebrenica.[1258]

Attempting to take advantage of the Ottoman attack on the Despotate in May 1455, Srebrenica's neighbor Duke Petar attacked Srebrenica. According to Serbian chronicles, the Bosnian Duke was defeated in this battle by Dmitar Radojević.[1259] The Ragusan documents do not mention these activities of Duke Petar in mid-1455. In December 1454, for unknown reasons, his envoys stayed in Ragusa when the local authorities decided to send gifts in cloth to the Bosnian nobleman.[1260] Following the change in power after Đurađ's death, his son Lazar took control of Srebrenica. In November 1457, a court trial took place in Srebrenica between the people of Herzog Stjepan

[1255] "de induciando super facto denariorum mercatorum de Strebeniza"; "de induciando ad diem veneris" (5. 12. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 265v. "de induciando super facto denariorum imprestitorum ex actorum in Strebeniza a mercatoribus per ser Dragoe de Sorgo et missorum Ragusium per famulum ser Johannis Mar. de Restis qui fuerunt acepti per Stancich et postra redditi ser Johanni Mar. de Restis, videlicet, yperperos CXIIII"; "de induciando per totum mensem aprilis" (7. 12. 1453) Ibid., 266.

[1256] (10. 10. 1454) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 187-188.

[1257] "de vetando ciuibus nostris Raguseis et aliis qui se pro earum appelant quod non vadant cum auere per territoriam chercech Stiepani et de scribendo merchatoribus et ciuibus nostris qui sunt in Srebreniza et alibi quod non veniant cum auere per territorium chercech Stiepani donec aliud terminabitur per presens consilium rogatorum sub pena X pro cento illis qui contrafacerent" (5. 11. 1454) Cons. Rog. XIV, 98v.

[1258] (30. 1. 1455) (1. 2. 1455) (21. 2. 1455) Cons. Rog. XIV, 128, 128v, 134v.

[1259] Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 122.

[1260] "de donando voiuode Pethar Dinicich"; "de donando dicto voiuode Pethar iperperis quingentos in pannis; de donando ambassiatoribus dicti voiuode Pethar" (17. 12. 1454) Cons. Rog. XIV, 113.

and the Ragusans over the theft of 180 ducats. The court consisted of Despot's Duke Miloš, burghers, the prince, and the nobility of Srebrenica, and a decision was made to hold all the accused equally responsible since they had spent the night in the house where the money was stolen.[1261]

After the death of Despot Lazar, changes in ownership of Srebrenica occurred once again. According to reports from Venetian subjects in Split, by mid-February at the latest, Tomaš had occupied Srebrenica and some other fortresses in the vicinity. Tomaš assigned the occupied places to his nobles Tvrtko Stančić and Tvrtko Kovačević, while he kept Srebrenica and two more fortified towns for himself.[1262] Tomaš's actions around Srebrenica undoubtedly happened earlier, considering the necessary time for news to reach Split. The conquest of the territory over which Bosnian kings and Serbian despots had actively confronted in previous decades, according to the decisions of the Ragusan councils, could chronologically be placed in the second half of January 1458. This is supported by the fact that from that time onwards, there was a sudden change in the economic relations between Ragusa and this area, manifested through the frequent issuance of permits for merchants to depart.[1263] After the establishment of the Bosnian king's authority in Srebrenica, the Ragusans continued to face difficulties in traveling through the herzog's territory. In mid-April 1458, they informed their permanent envoys at Herzog Stjepan and the sultan about these problems.[1264] The danger on the roads due to Ottoman threats persisted to such an extent that the Ragusans were forced the following month to recommend

[1261] (10. 11. 1457) Jireček, *Spomenici srpski*, 87-88.

[1262] "Nove havemo, come mori Lazaro despot, cussi Re de Bossnia cum hoste ando la et si ha preso Srebarniça, et altri castelli 11, deli quali reservo a si castelli 3 et 5 diti Astanach et quatro Atavacevich, li quali hano zurato esser soto posti alo dominio de Re de Bossina, li quali Sresbarniça et castelli 2 ha reservato Re per si" (22. 2. 1458) Macuscev, *Monumenta historica* II, 204.

[1263] (18. 1. 1458) (23. 1. 1458) Cons. Rog. XV, 211, 211v.

[1264] "scribendi nobilibus et mercatoribus nostris in Srebrniza et in Smedreuo et Michailo Angelouich gubernatore Rassie" (10. 4. 1458) Cons. Rog. XV, 236. "scribendi ambassiatoribus nostris qui vadunt ad Magnum Turchum et ad cherzech Stiepanum pro facto mercatorum nostrorum in Strebreniza"; "scribendi mercatoribus nostris in Srebreniza" (17. 4. 1458) Ibid., 239. "scribendi ad cherzech Stiepanum et mercatoribus nostris de Srebreniza et Sclauonie" (24. 4. 1458) Ibid., 240.

their nobleman Sigismund Goze, who was returning from Srebrenica, to Herzog Stjepan and his subjects.[1265]

With Tomaš's conquest of Srebrenica in early 1458, the frequent change of power over this place between Bosnia and the Despotate came to an end, considering the fact that the Despotate was captured by the Ottomans in mid-1459. By the late 1450s, due to the Ottoman presence and the impassable roads, the economic capacity of Srebrenica had greatly diminished. In the past few years of Bosnian rule over Srebrenica, Ragusan authorities have been less inclined to issue special permits for travel to Srebrenica, reducing the significance of this mining center. With further Ottoman conquests, Srebrenica came under Ottoman rule in April 1462.[1266]

1265 (22. 5. 1458) Cons. Rog. XV, 249.

1266 Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 85.

VI

ECONOMIC CONTACTS

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The incorporation of the territories of Bosnia and the Despotate into a unified Ragusan economic space conditioned the existence of similar economic patterns in these medieval states. At the beginning of the 15th century, the Bosnian state inherited a decades-long experience in the sphere of Ragusan economic policies. The main principles of economic exchange were legally established and deeply rooted as tradition and customary law, and with Bosnian economic centers populated by numerous Ragusan merchants and craftsmen. The Despotate, on the other hand, only began the process of legal integration into the Ragusan economic framework in the early 15th century, as Prince Stefan Lazarević did not grant economic privileges to the Ragusan authorities in the 1390s. These elements did not, however, impede the development of economic relations between Ragusa and the Despotate, which soon merged into a similar economic environment. The geographic location of Bosnia dictated the entire economic exchange between Ragusa and the Despotate through the territory under the authority of the Bosnian crown, allowing Bosnian kings and nobility to hold the key to the economic flow towards the Despotate in their hands. It was precisely this aspect of economic circumstances that led to this type of contact between Bosnia and the Despotate throughout the 15th century.

After leaving the narrow coastal strip of land that was part of the Republic of Ragusa, merchants entered Bosnian territory, where they continued their journey along Bosnian roads. Most of the traffic towards the Despotate followed the well-known Bosnian route (*via Bosne*), also known as the Trebinje route (*via Trebigne*) and the Drina route (*via Drine*). Additionally, this route was sometimes referred to as the Foča route (*via Coze*).[1267] The

[1267] Jireček, *Trgovački drumovi*, 117-120. Gavro Škrivanić, *Putevi u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji*, Novinsko izdavačko preduzeće "Turistička štampa", Beograd 1970, 43-50.

Bosnian route led from Ragusa through Trebinje towards Gacko and further north to Foča, where this route split into two directions that led to the Despotate. One direction went north through Goražde and Višegrad towards Srebrenica, where the crossing over the Drina River into the Despotate took place, while the other direction from Foča led east towards Pljevlja, and from there to Sjenica and further into the territory of the Despotate.[1268] In addition to the Lim River area, economic traffic with the Despotate was conducted along the Jezero route (*via Jesera*), also known as the Lim route (*via Limi*) and the Nikšić route (*via Anagosti*).[1269] When leaving Bosnian territory, merchants arrived at crossings that were marked as *paregium* in the Ragusan documents. These crossings were places where transit customs were paid when leaving Bosnia and entering the territory of the Despotate. Several crossings were established on the Drina River, and records of crossings exist in Crnča near Bratunac, Kostirevo, Srebrenica, near Dušće close to Višegrad, and Perin.[1270] Transit customs were also collected on the Lim River near Trgovište.[1271] The increase in traffic along the Ragusa-Despotate route during the first half of the 15th century positively influenced the economic development of the Kosača possessions. Additionally, all the towns in the Upper Podrinje region were primarily trading centers with established customs held and collected by the Kosača family.[1272]

It is clear from the contracts on the debts of individuals and merchant guilds, in which the geographical scope of their activities is specified, that Bosnia and the Despotate were integrated into the Ragusan economic sphere.[1273] The most common range of operations for merchants from Bos-

[1268] Škrivanić, *Putevi*, 43-50.

[1269] Kurtović, *Konj*, 263-264.

[1270] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 38, 43-44. Dinić, "Karavanska trgovina", 127. Kovačević-Kojić, *Gradska naselja*, 99. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 23.

[1271] (16. 8. 1402) Div. Canc. XXXIV, 152. Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 459.

[1272] Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, "Naselja u zemlji Kosača", in: *Kosače-osnivači Hercegovine*, 365-366.

[1273] About merchant guilds in the Despotate, see: Momčilo Spremić, "Dubrovačka trgovačka društva u Despotovini Đurđa Brankovića", in: *Prekinut uspon. Srpske zemlje u poznom srednjem veku*, 205-225.

nia and Ragusa was limited to the territory of the Republic and the markets in Bosnia and the Despotate, and their presence can be traced from 1401.[1274] The most frequent debts of merchants planning to conduct their activities in the regions of Bosnia and the Despotate were recorded during the 1420s and 1430s. However, in line with the changes in the political situation during the increasing Ottoman attacks in the 1440s and 1450s, their number significantly decreased. In addition to the Ragusan merchants, a certain number of Bosnian residents who directed their trading activities in a geographical sense towards Bosnia and the Despotate were also registered.[1275]

[1274] (24. 10. 1401) (7. 2. 1402) (27. 2. 1402) (24. 5. 1402) DSA, Debita Notariae XII, 40v, 63v, 69, 89v. Kurtović, *Izvori za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 50, 53, 54, 56.

[1275] (13. 8. 1426) (12. 10. 1426) (10. 4. 1428) (29. 9. 1428) (30. 10. 1428) Deb. Not. XIV, 47, 63v, 180, 218v, 232. (2. 2. 1431) Deb. Not. XV, 31. (26. 3. 1435) (21. 5. 1435) (25. 7. 1435) (25. 7. 1435) Deb. Not. XVII, 78v, 101v, 134, 134v. (29. 4. 1439) Deb. Not. XIX, 18. (15. 6. 1442) Deb. Not. XXI, 132. Kurtović, *Izvori za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 98, 100, 121, 124, 125, 126, 153, 154, 194, 195, 197, 199, 200, 217, 252.

Bosnia and the Despotate in the framework of the Ragusan economic circle

The proclamation of Stefan Lazarević as Serbian despot in 1402 did not result in significant changes in economic practices in the region. The principle of economic fluctuation between this region and Ragusa, passing through the territory of the Bosnian state, had already existed in previous years, as evidenced by data from November 1396 when Ragusan merchants were prevented from crossing into the territory of Prince Stefan due to the presence of the Bosnian army in Podkučlat.[1276] Vlachs from Bosnia were actively involved in trade exchanges between Ragusa and the Despotate, which were carried out by caravans. This is illustrated by a contract drawn up in June 1402, in which the Mirilović Vlachs committed to transporting goods from Ragusa *per viam regni Bossine* to the Church of St. Nicola on the Lim river.[1277] Trade, especially in precious metals, in centers such as Pristina, Novo Brdo, Rudnik, and Trepča, was of great importance to the Ragusans who conducted business and frequently traveled to Serbian and Bosnian economic centers, following advanced economic trends. The position of the Bosnian state, through which the most important routes to the Despotate passed, frequently posed a significant problem in facilitating economic exchange. Frequent wars, increased customs duties, caravan raids, and other changes in the relations between Bosnian kings and the nobility with the Ragusans and despots, inevitably led to disruptions in the trade traffic with the Despotate.

The war between King Ostoja and the Ragusans resulted in hindered economic traffic through Bosnian territory even before the official granting

[1276] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 182. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 35.

[1277] (25. 6. 1402) Div. Canc. XXXIV, 131. Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 456.

of privileges to the Ragusans by Despot Stefan in 1405.[1278] Upon the first signs of conflict in early July, a serious warning was issued for merchants to leave Bosnian territory.[1279] Although a decision by the Ragusan authorities in September 1403 allowed the merchants to travel to the Despotate,[1280] a separate decree was soon issued strictly prohibiting the transportation of salt, money, and goods through the territory of the Bosnian king (*propter guerram et dampna nobis facta et ilata per Hostoiam regem Bosne et suos barones et subditos*), under the threat of losing them.[1281] The same decree exempted merchants in Hungary and the Despotate, where trade continued unhindered, but they were forbidden from trading within Bosnian territory under the threat of punishment.[1282] Although the strict decree was supposed to last as long as the war with Bosnia, by October, more lenient conditions were added for the areas of Trebinje, Dračevica, Konavle, Popovo, Krajina, and Luka, which constituted the immediate hinterland of Ragusa and served as the routes to the Despotate.[1283] A special permit for travelling to the Despotate *per viam Bosne* was granted in late November 1403, allowing one of the two Tamarić brothers, Branko or Ratko Tamarić, to undertake

[1278] (2. 12. 1405) Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, 218. Miklosich, *Monumenta,* 266. At the same time, the Brankovićs also issued a charter for free trade on their territory to the Ragusans. Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, 221. Miklosich, *Monumenta,* 229. Kalić, "Snaženje Despotovine", 76.

[1279] "de precipiendo omnibus nostris mercatoribus de Ragusio existentibus in contratis Regni Bossine quod debeant se levare et exire de omnibus contratis dicti Regni"; "venire Ragusium aut ire alio cum suis rebus ad alias partes extra Regnum Bossine" (2. 7. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 155.

[1280] "de franchando ciues nostros mercatores Ragusii quod possint cum eorum mercanciis et rebus ire in Sclauoniam" (18. 9. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 169.

[1281] "Ordo pro sale non portando ad partes Regni Bosne … pro mercanciis denarios vel alias res ad aliquam partem Regni Bosne sub pena perdendi dictas mercancias, denarios et res" (19. 9. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 169v.

[1282] "exceptatem mercatoribus existentibus in Hungaria vel in Sclauonia qui possint ire et transire pro suis opportunitatibus per dicta Regna Hungarie et Sclauonie non faciendo aliquas mercancias, scilicet, possit cum suis mercanciis venire Ragusium. Et si eundo vel redeundo faceret mercancias vel aliquod traffigium in Bosna vel in aliqua parte Regni Bosne cadat ad penam" (19. 9. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 170.

[1283] This appendix was added to the earlier decree of prohibition issued on September 19, 1403. (20. 10. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 169v.

the journey. The parameters of the permit indicate the strict restrictions imposed by Ragusa. One of the Tamarić brothers who was allowed to go to the Despotate obtained the permit for the purpose of collecting debts owed by Živolin Stanišić. He was not allowed to carry goods and could only carry as much money as was necessary to cover the expenses. Furthermore, he was not allowed to unnecessarily stay in Bosnia and was specifically required to swear that the permit was not sought for other reasons.[1284] Despite the prohibition on traveling to the Bosnian king and nobility due to the ongoing conflict, the Ragusan authorities occasionally permitted the export of goods.[1285] The intensity of the political relations at the end of 1403 also influenced the frequency of trade.[1286]

Diplomatic contacts between Bosnia and Ragusa in the summer of 1404 indicate trade problems between the Republic and the Despotate during the war with the Bosnian king. Ragusan envoys were sent to the noblemen Sandalj Hranić and Pavle Radinović, and they were ordered to attend a meeting where they were supposed to emphasize that due to the war, they were forced to suspend trade through Bosnia with Rudnik and other places in the Despotate.[1287] The requested confirmation of previous privileges could not be obtained by the Ragusan officials due to the fact that a new king had not been elected in Bosnia, and this document was issued by Tvrtko II in June 1405.[1288]

1284 "de faciendo gratiam Brancho aut Ratcho Tamarich quod possit ire in Sclauonia per viam Bosne non portando secum aliquas mercancias nec denarios saluo tot quot sunt ai neccesari pro expensis suis. Et hoc ut debita contra Ziuolini Stanisich exigi posint ab ilius. Et quod Brancho aut Ratcho non faciunt moram in Regno Bosne nisy transitum expeditum. Et juarare debeant sacramentum quod ab aliam causam non vadiunt per Bosnam nixi per meliori eorum securitatem" (26. 11. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 181.

1285 (31. 7. 1403) (7. 8. 1403) (13. 8. 1403) (15. 8. 1403) (16. 8. 1403) (20. 8. 1403) (23. 8. 1403) (24. 8. 1403) (28. 8. 1403) (19. 9. 1403) (23. 9. 1403) (1. 10. 1403) (2. 10. 1403) (12. 11. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 162, 163, 163v, 164, 164v, 165v, 166v, 169, 170v, 171v, 177v, 178.

1286 (19. 12. 1403) (20. 12. 1403) Ref. XXXII, 184v, 185.

1287 "Item ve acometemo siando fate le poueye debiate agrauarvi de le ree uxançe che se faceano a nostri mercadanti nel tempo de Ostoya in Souixochi, in Desseuiçe, in Sreberniça, a Narente et per li altri luogi de mercato per le qual molti mercadanti plu volentera sene andaua in Rudnich et per li altri mercadi de Sclauonia" (28. 5. 1404) Lett. di Lev. IV, 66v.

1288 Kovačević, *Trgovina*, 46.

Concurrently, Ragusan merchants faced problems in the Despotate during 1405.[1289]

New difficulties in trade occurred during the years of Hungarian attacks on Bosnia starting from 1407. The Ragusan authorities prohibited merchants from traveling to Bosnia and through Bosnian territory to more distant locations due to the dangers on Bosnian roads.[1290] This decision remained in effect until the end of September 1407 when merchants were once again allowed to travel to the territory of Despot Stefan and Mara.[1291] During this time, Ragusan merchants came into direct conflict with the Hungarian army in Bosnia,[1292] while problems arose with Stefan in the Despotate, which the authorities sought to resolve without disrupting trade.[1293] Tense political relations in Bosnia during 1410 caused significant problems for the merchants, to the extent that the authorities complained to Herzog Hrvoje about how the Ottomans, whom they considered pagans, were not interfering with their trade in the Despotate or Bosnia in the same manner.[1294] Despite the efforts of the Ragusans to maintain their profits, trade with the territory under the control of Mara Branković was suspended in February 1411 due to news from the Despotate.[1295] It was precisely during

[1289] (27. 4. 1405) Lett. di Lev. IV, 91v-92. (16. 12. 1405) Ibid., V, 71.

[1290] Proposals that were not adopted: "de induciando supra facto mercatorum nostrorum ire voluerint ad partes Sclauonie"; de deliberando si ita per viam Bosne cum per viam Zente." The proposal was adopted: "de retinendo pro nunc mercatores nostros"; "de vetando quod dicti mercatores nostros non vadant per Bosnam nec per Scutari" (30. 8. 1407) Ref. XXXIII, 226.

[1291] Proposal was not adopted: "de franchando merchatores ire volentis ad partes Sclauonie"; and it was postponed: "de induciando usque quo veniret cursor missus ad dominam Maram in Sclavonia" (5. 9. 1407) Ref. XXXIII, 226v. "de franchando mercatores volentes ire in contratas dispotti"; "de franchando mercatores ire volentes ad contratas domine Mare" (27. 9. 1407) Ibid., 227v.

[1292] (11. 3. 1410) Ref. XXXIII, 273. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 149.

[1293] "de grauando se ambasciadori domini dispotti de nouitatibus mercatoribus nostris" (7. 5. 1410) Ref. XXXIII, 276. The proposal was not adopted: "de vettando mercatoribus nostris ire vadant ad contratas domini dispoti" The proposal was adopted: "de indusiando." Ibid., 276v.

[1294] "Et similemente li Turchi che sono pagani ne in Sclauonia ne in Bosna ostizando mai non ofexe a nessuno nostro mercadante" (16. 3. 1410) Lett. di Lev. V, 7.

[1295] "quod pro nouitatibus factis in Sclauonia de retinendo mercatores nostros quod non vadant ad partes Sclauonie et contratas domine Mare" (20. 2. 1411) Ref. XXXIII, 291.

this time that the Ragusan authorities filed a complaint to Duke Sandalj about the increase in customs duties on his territory that did not exist previously.[1296] Once the political situation between Bosnia and Hungary had been stabilized, trade through Bosnian routes was reopened in May 1411.[1297] Using the less profitable route through Shkodra, the Ragusans attempted to avoid the frequent military activities that caused problems in transit along Bosnian routes. However, they encountered difficulties there as well due to the increase in local customs duties by Venetian officials.[1298]

Merchants encountered further difficulties in Bosnia in March 1413, when discussions were held in Ragusa about new taxes imposed by their neighbor, Prince Grgur Nikolić.[1299] In May 1413, the Ragusan authorities also complained to Prince Petar Pavlović about the introduction of new customs duties on his territory and the increased number of robberies in Ustikolina.[1300] Ragusans addressed King Ostoja two months later regarding the difficulties their merchants were experiencing in Bosnia.[1301] Due to issues on Bosnian roads caused by Ottoman incursions, the Ragusans announced in August 1414 to their merchants in the Despotate that they could use the route through Shkodra.[1302] It appears that this situation persisted in the following months as well. After the wedding of Đurađ Branković, held the following year, the Ragusans apologized for not being able to send their envoys due to the safety concerns on Bosnian roads.[1303]

1296 (22. 2. 1411) Lett. di Lev. VII, 1.

1297 "de franchando mercatores nostros quod possint ire ad partes Sclauonie"; "de precipiendo dictis mercatoribus quod vadant per viam Bosne" Ref. XXXIII, 294v. "quod mercatores euntes in Sclavoniam vadant omnes simul per territorium Bossine" (16. 5. 1411) Ibid., 295.

1298 (8. 12. 1408) Lett. di Lev. IV, 147v.

1299 (22. 3. 1414) Ref. XXXIV, 217v.

1300 (3. 5. 1413) Lett. di Lev. VII, 67v.

1301 (24. 6. 1413) Ref. XXXIV, 197.

1302 "Et digando come prima aremo mandato da lui a rallegrarne se non fusse el caso de Turchi per la via de Bossina" Lett. di Lev. VII, 118v. (8. 1. 1415) (19. 1. 1415) (26. 4. 1415) Cons. Rog. I, 1v, 2, 12v.

1303 "Et digando come prima aremo mandato da lui a rallegrarne se non fusse el caso de Turchi per la via de Bossina" Lett. di Lev. VII, 118v. Cons. Rog. I, 1v, 2, 12v.

Ragusan authorities reestablished trade through Bosnian territory after the Ottoman threat subsided. However, this did not mark the end of troubles for the merchants. In early April 1417, trade with Bosnia, Zeta, and the Branković region was permitted, but visits to the Despotate were not allowed due to a dispute with Despot Stefan over customs increases in Srebrenica.[1304] The following year, problems arose with customs duties on the territory under the authority of Grgur Nikolić, which hindered trade with other parts of Bosnia, including the Despotate. This was contrary to the agreements, treaties, arrangements, regulations, and good customs that the Ragusans had with the rulers of Bosnia and the Despotate.[1305] The decisions of the Ragusan authorities in June and October 1418 regarding the prohibition and subsequent permission for trade with the Despotate should be understood in the context of the mutual relations between these two states.[1306] By the following year, political and economic relations had improved significantly, and the Ragusans allowed Despot Stefan to export weapons *per viam Bosne*.[1307]

The subsequent changes in the movement of merchants were recorded in the early 1420s when conflict arose between the Pavlovićs and the Ottomans. In line with the changing political circumstances, the Ragusan authorities discussed in late January 1420 the implementation of new measures for caravan trade on this territory. More significant changes occurred in February 1421 when merchants were prohibited from crossing the territory of Duke Radoslav.[1308] An alternative route to the Despotate was found through the route leading via Lezhë and Shkodra, and occasional permits were issued for

[1304] (3. 4. 1417) Cons. Rog. I, 61v.

[1305] "Ordines editi contra Gregorium Nicolich occasione noue gabelle per eum imposite … Gregorio Nicholich nuper imposuerit unam nouam gabellam illis qui Ragusium et Stagnum accedunt que est contra pacta, conuentiones, ordines et bonas consuetudines quas nostrum dominium Ragusii habet cum realibus Bossine et Sclauonie" (6. 5. 1418) Cons. Rog. I, 114v.

[1306] (1. 6. 1418) Cons. Rog. I, 120v. (4. 10. 1418) Cons. Rog. II, 1.

[1307] (9. 8. 1419) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 55.

[1308] "de dando licentiam mercatoribus quod ex saumis seu charauani mercanciarum mittere possint per viam Slano non eundo per contratas Radossaui" (25. 2. 1421) Cons. Rog. III, 20.

the transportation of goods through the Trebinje route.[1309] Even by the end of 1421, the situation with Bosnian roads did not significantly improve. In November, the Ragusans informed their envoys at Despot Stefan that the roads through Bosnia were not safe, and they ordered the return of the envoys via Zeta, while the option of returning through Bosnian territory was rejected.[1310] Registered robberies indicated the occurrence of confiscation and theft from caravans sent from Ragusa to the Despotate.[1311] Correspondence with Duke Radoslav regarding the transit of the Ragusan merchants through his territory also took place in June 1424, indicating a broader chronological range of difficult conditions on Bosnian roads.[1312] Explicit bans on merchants traveling to the Despotate and the Branković territory were imposed in October 1425, during the conflict between Tvrtko II and Despot Stefan over Srebrenica.[1313] This prohibition was lifted in early 1426 when the departure of merchants to Bosnia was allowed, while travel to the Despotate was arranged via Zeta. The ban still applied to merchants traveling to Srebrenica.[1314] The Ragusan authorities also discussed matters concerning merchants in the Despotate in mid-March when a decision was made to send letters to the merchants there, the despot, and Đurađ.[1315]

[1309] "de dando libertatem domino Rectori et suo paruo consilio licentiandi usque ad salmas viginti mercantiarum mittendarum in Sclauoniam per viam Alesii" (23. 1. 1421) Cons. Rog. III, 16. (11. 2. 1421) (15. 4. 1421) Ibid., 18, 29.

[1310] "de rescribendo et licentiam dando ser Micaeli de Restis et ser Nicole P. de Poza ambaxiatores ad dispothum quod expedita commissione eorum reuertantur Ragusium per viam Zente aut per illam aliam quam ipsi habiliorem elegerint" (12. 11. 1421) Cons. Rog. III, 62v. Lett. di Lev. VII, 171-171v.

[1311] "carauana que ibat in Sclauoniam" (9. 7. 1420) Lam. de for. IV, 212. Kurtović, *Ispisi građe za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne (Lamenta de foris*), 92. "dum aliqui mercatores de Ragusio irent cum carauano in Sclauonia" (15. 9. 1423) Lam. de for. V, 201. "de Sclauonia veniret Ragusium" (2. 7. 1427) Ibid., VII, 200.

[1312] (8. 6. 1424) Cons. Rog. III, 215v.

[1313] (8. 10. 1425) Cons. Minus III, 258. Despite the ban, just a few days later, Despot Stefan was allowed to export weapons from Ragusa. (9. 10. 1425) Cons. Rog. III, 264, 264v.

[1314] (11. 1. 1426) Cons. Rog. III, 277v. "de franchando mercatores nostros quod cum eorum mercanciis ire possint in Sclauoniam per viam Zente"; "de franchando suprascriptis nostris mercatoribus viam Bosne et Sclauonie excepto quod ire non possint Srebrnizam" (18. 1. 1426) Ibid., 279.

[1315] "respondendi literis nouissime receptis a domino despotho de Rassia et a domino Georgio Volcouich et a mercatoribus nostris Ragusinis ibidem" (19. 3. 1426) Cons. Rog. III, 293v.

In 1427, there was a conflict between the Republic of Ragusa and the Despotate as a result of difficulties faced by their merchants, leading to a prohibition on merchants leaving for Stefan's territory for most of the year. Trade was restored with the change of rulers.[1316] The Ragusan authorities were forced to cease all transportation of goods to the Despotate and *extra Regnum Bosne* in June.[1317] Shortly after these events, the Ragusan authorities were once again compelled to decide on sending a protest to the Bosnian king regarding the increase in customs duties.[1318] In April 1429, Ragusan merchants encountered difficulties passing through Bosnia due to the confiscation of silver.[1319] This was a new practice introduced by Tvrtko II in early 1428, which involved stamping of silver, and any cargo of silver without the king's seal was confiscated.[1320] This practice continued in the following period and had a significant impact on the trade between the Despotate and Ragusa, given that silver from the despot's mines was primarily transported through Bosnia.[1321]

Due to the outbreak of conflict between Ragusa and Radoslav in the 1430s, the economic flow between Ragusa and the Despotate, passing through Bosnian territory, suffered significant consequences. The strained relations between the Republic and the Bosnian nobleman began in October 1429 when the movement of caravans through Pavlović's territory was suspended.[1322] A brief stabilization of relations in November allowed transit

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[1316] "de franchando mercatores nostros quod cum mercanciis ire possint viam Sclauonie prout voluerint" (28. 11. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 41.

[1317] (8. 6. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 27.

[1318] The proposal was not adopted "scribendi literas sibi videbitur domino regi Bosne pro nouitate facta in gabellis suis", but this proposal was adopted instead: "de induciando" (10. 1. 1428) Cons. Rog. IV, 44.

[1319] "de deliberando supra literis receptis a mercatoribus Bosne occaxionem argenti retenti, lectis in presenti consilio" The second proposal was adopted: "de induciando" (18. 4. 1429) Cons. Rog. IV, 97v.

[1320] Kovačević, *Trgovina*, 92. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 125.

[1321] The Ragusans wrote to King Sigismund about the problems with silver transport in August 1434. Gelcich -Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 385.

[1322] "de mittendo unum nobilem ex nostris ad voiodam Radossauum pro recuperatione carauane et mercanciarum nostris retinentarum per dictum voiuodam" (21. 10. 1429) Cons. Rog. IV, 122v. "de retinendo quod nulla carauna cum mercanciis nostrorum ire et transire debeat per contratas voiuode Radossaui" (27. 11. 1430) Ibid., 123v.

to resume.[1323] From the spring of 1430, when military operations began, we observe new changes in business relations between Bosnia and Ragusa. Special permits were issued in Ragusa in May 1430 to allow the arrival of the Vlach population for trade purposes.[1324] An anonymous Ragusan chronicler also mentions the difficulties faced by merchants heading to the Despotate.[1325] The economic flow was influenced by the oscillations in political relations. The situation often changed during the summer months. At the end of June, the Ragusan authorities introduced an explicit ban on the departure of caravans from Ragusa, Drijeva, and Ston to Bosnia, under the threat of a fine of 600 ducats.[1326] The suspension of trade traffic resulted in daily financial losses, so just a few days later, a permit for reduced and less risky trade with Bosnia was passed in Ragusa.[1327] In accordance with the wartime conditions, accusations of confiscating goods on Bosnian territory arose.[1328] The Ragusans had no better luck in the autumn of 1430 with the attempt to open an alternative route through Zeta, Lezhë, and Shkodra.[1329]

[1323] "de franchando mercatores nostros quod cum mercantiis eorum ire possint in Sclauoniam et alibi per illas vias et loca de quibus et prout sibi videbitur" (12. 11. 1429) Cons. Rog. IV, 125v.

[1324] (12. 5. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 161.

[1325] "1430. De magio, di giorno di sabato, a Pasca Rosata, habero Ragusei guerra con Radosav Pavlovich a Trebigne, perche gaceva mal alli nostri mercanti, li quali passavano in Servia; et fu con gran dano alli Ragusei." Ragnina, *Annales*, 55.

[1326] "de retinendo carauanam mercatorum nostrorum tam mercantiarum quam monetarum que vadit in Bosnam tam eorum qui sunt Ragusii, Stagni, Narenti, quam usque ad Necraynum."; "qui contrafacerit scriptius proxime preteriti supra capte de retinendo carauanam cadat ad penam ducatorum auri sexcentorum" (28. 6. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 186. "quia prohibitio facta ne mercantie et alie res vadant in Bosnam sit firma cum condictione quod de Ragusio ire volentes Stagnum possint ire cum mercantiis et ibidem manere sub dicta prohibitione" (30. 6. 1430) Ibid., 187.

[1327] "de franchando mercatores ire volentes cum eorum mercantiis in Bosnam"; "quia carauana preparata ire debeat diuisa per medietatem, videlicet, non eundo pro qualibet vice ultra salmas XXX et differrendo decem dies una post aliam" (5. 7. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 189v. The proposal was not adopted: "de franchando mercatores qui ire volent in Bosnam cum denariis" Ibid., 193.

[1328] "scribendi mercatoribus nostris de Bosna pro denariorum stronzatis de quibus scribit ambaxiator noster ad regem" (5. 9. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 229v.

[1329] (29. 8. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 223. The proposal was not adopted: "de permittendo quod mercatores nostri ire possint viam Zente", but this proposal was adopted instead: "de non permitendo"; "de prohibendo dictam viam mercatoribus per totum mensem septembris et qui contrafecerunt cadat

Despite the problems that arose, the authorities allowed the export of weapons to Despot Đurađ in September 1430.[1330]

Development of political relations between Bosnia, Ragusa, and the Despotate, arising from the Konavle War, led to a conflict between King Tvrtko II and Despot Đurađ, resulting in a collapse of economic traffic. The ban on the departure of merchants from Ragusa has been in force since March 1431.[1331] During the autumn of that year, the Bosnian king imposed a complete ban on Ragusan trade, resulting in a major crisis. The Ragusan authorities made every effort to maintain trade, and a temporary solution was found through the possessions of Duke Sandalj, with whom they still had good relations.[1332] In early October, a decision was made to send envoys to King Tvrtko II with the task of requesting permission for merchants to go to Srebrenica and the Despotate.[1333] The Bosnian king did not relent in the economic blockade of the Despotate due to the conflict with Đurađ. Discussions were held in October regarding the problems faced by merchants on the roads to the Despotate, and decisions were made to partially open the route to the Despotate through Sandalj's possessions and the Zeta road, while two months later, passage through Shkodra was allowed.[1334] However, these alternative routes were not particularly profitable for the Republic, which primarily sought to ensure unhindered transit through Bosnian

ad penam triginza per centenario." (5. 9. 1430) Ibid., 230. Veselinović "Carinski sistem", 20. "recommendatione dum alias e dicto domini despotis Sclauonie cogerenter mercatores nostri deuitare viam Scutari propter discensionem quod erat inter ipsum dispot et Goicinum dominantem in Albania." (20. 12. 1430) Lett. di Lev. XI, 12v.

[1330] "de dando libertatem ser Mateo de Gradi possendi nomine domini despoti Georgii emere et extrahere miliaria decem salnitrii sine aliqua gabella." (4. 9. 1430) Cons. Rog. IV, 229.

[1331] (7. 3. 1431) Cons. Rog. IV, 270v.

[1332] (26. 9. 1431) (1. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 37.

[1333] "scribendi domino regi Bosne recommittendo sibi mercatores nostros et quod permittere velit eos transire et ire cum suis mercanciis in Srebrenizam" (1. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 37v. "de induciando ad consulendum super literis regis Bosne lectis in presenti consilio super facto franchi et mercantiarum non mittendarum in Sclavoniam quibus non dabit transitum." (12. 10. 1431) Ibid., 39v.

[1334] (1. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 37. "de franchando mercatores nostros quod ire possint per viam Zente in Sclauoniam cum mercanciis" (12. 10. 1431) Ibid., 39v. (1. 12. 1431) Ibid., 52.

roads. Despite the Ragusans' courtesies, the financial losses did not elicit sympathy from the Bosnian king.[1335] In late November 1431, the Ragusans drafted instructions for the two envoys sent to the Bosnian king. Among the complaints of the authorities were the arrests of merchants, the confiscation of silver, and the closure of passages to the Despotate and Hungary. The area where King Tvrtko II imposed the ban, according to instructions from the Ragusan authorities to the Bosnian king, referred *to paese et contrade della corona vostra*.[1336]

Through their envoys at the Bosnian king's court, the Ragusan authorities continued to exert pressure for the opening of trade routes at the beginning of 1432. It was clear at that time that the prohibition was imposed due to the conflict between Tvrtko II and Despot Đurađ.[1337] More favorable political conditions emerged in February when the Ragusan negotiators engaged with Duke Radoslav, leading to the opening of trade through the territory of Pavlović.[1338] The strained relations between Bosnia and the Despotate continued to influence Tvrtko II to maintain an economic blockade, which Ragusan envoys complained about in May, stating that this type of economic policy was causing more harm to the Republic than to the Despotate.[1339] The foundation for establishing unhindered trade was not present considering the fact that the conflict with Despot Đurađ reached its peak at that time and intermittently lasted until the summer of 1433. As early as

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[1335] (15. 10. 1431) Cons. Rog. V, 40. (20. 10. 1431) Cons. Maius IV, 156v.

[1336] "E mancho quelo de la signoria nostra son interuenute e fate algune auanie alli nostri mercadanti nello paese et contrade della corona vostra, come e de ligare essi mercatanti e pigliarli le loro mercantie et argenti a torto e pecado. Et anche recluse e vie che non possino liberamente segondo lo usado passare oltra lo monte per andar in Sclauonia o Hongaria et altro la tene et crede che tal auanie et nouita non proceda de propria volunta et instincto de la seruita vostra Maiestate" (25. 11. 1431) Lett. di Lev. XI, 64.

[1337] "E prima per la risposta a vui data per lo Re dela liberation de la via fatta e detta alli mercadanti nostri possano passar et andar allo Reame de Ungaria, Schiauania et altre come sempre la qual suspensione fu solo per certo scandalo del signor dispothi Zorzi verslo la sua corona etc." (19. 1. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 68.

[1338] (23. 2. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 73v.

[1339] (14. 5. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 94.

1432, special permits were issued to allow the export of goods, such as the permit issued to Sandalj's people, and merchants without goods were also permitted to travel to Bosnia and the Despotate in order to finish personal matters they had begun there.[1340] Discussions regarding sending envoys to the Bosnian king in Ragusa took place throughout August 1432.[1341] On the other hand, from the spring of 1432, the Ragusans had been engaged in correspondence with the despot due to problems their merchants encountered in Novo Brdo with the local population, resulting in several instances where trade with the Despotate was banned.[1342] Despite access to trade routes, Ragusan merchants were not guaranteed a safe arrival at their destinations. In mid-November, a complaint was sent to Duke Sandalj regarding the confiscation of goods from one of their caravans.[1343] A special permit was required to enter Ragusa at the end of 1432, indicating that economic trade was extremely difficult.[1344] The authorities were forced to close alternative routes through Zeta and Shkodra towards the end of 1432.[1345] There were also disruptions in trade during the reconciliation negotiations between King Tvrtko II, Duke Radoslav, and the Ragusans. Due to frequent increases in customs duties, transit through the Trebinje region fluctuated throughout 1433.[1346] In March 1433, Tvrtko II issued a charter to the Ragusans, officially ending the Konavle War. However, for the Bosnian-Ragusan

[1340] (21. 2. 1432) (17. 8. 1432) Cons. Minus V, 180v, 214.

[1341] "de induciando respondendum literis hodie receptis ad ambassiatores nostris ad Regem Bosne usque ad primas literas percipiendas" (8. 8. 1432) Cons. Rog. V, 100. "de reperiendo et modo in presenti consilio legendi cartam ambaxiatorum nostrorum ad regem Bosne de qua arengatum est" (14. 8. 1432) Ibid., 100.

[1342] (5. 4. 1432) (3. 7. 1432) (11. 7. 1432) (8. 2. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 77, 92, 95, 124.

[1343] (18. 11. 1432) Lett. di Lev. XI, 122-123.

[1344] "de dando fidem Vochaç Vozichnich homini voiuode Radossaui Paulouich veniendi Ragusium hic standum quouaque steterint hic ambaxiator dicti Radossaui et redeundo tutte et libere" (14. 8. 1432) Cons. Rog. V, 100. (21. 2. 1432) (24. 7. 1432) (17. 8. 1432) Cons. Minus V, 180v, 210v, 214.

[1345] "de contrauetando mercatoribus nostris quod cum pannis et aliis mercanciis ire non possint neque debeant in Sclauoniam per viam Zente" (10. 10. 1432) Cons. Rog. V, 107v. The proposal was not adopted: "de franchando carauanas mercatorum nostrorum quod ire possint in Sclauoniam per viam Scutari", this was adopted instead: "de non franchando" (3. 11. 1432) Ibid., 114v.

[1346] (11. 3. 1433) (17. 4. 1433) (29. 5. 1433) Cons. Rog. V, 127v, 135, 144v.

economic relations, this act marked the end of only one episode in their relationship.[1347]

Due to Tvrtko's insistence on payment of special duties, silver transportation from the Despotate through Bosnian territory was difficult in the 1430s and onwards. The Ragusan authorities discussed the utilization of the Bosnian king's stay with Sigismund in early 1435 to engage their suzerain to help them with these duties.[1348] In March 1436, the Ragusans sought to exploit the Ottoman presence in Bosnia and requested the Ottoman voivode Barak to compel Bosnian dukes Stjepan Vukčić and Radoslav Pavlović not to disturb their merchants on their territory.[1349] The Ragusans soon encountered difficulties due to attacks by the Ottoman army on their caravans.[1350] Concurrently, Ragusan merchants faced issues because of new duties imposed by Despot Đurađ. In a letter from April 1436, they wrote to him that his actions could also influence the Bosnian magnates, who might soon start implementing similar methods in Bosnia.[1351]

The conflict between Bosnian nobles Radoslav Pavlović and Stjepan Vukčić over Trebinje, which began in early 1438, also affected the frequency of trade and other economic activities in the immediate vicinity of Ragusa, which certainly reflected in the traffic with the Despotate. As mediators between the warring parties, the Ragusans attempted to free the roads for unhindered traffic in August 1438.[1352] However, these were not the only problems. Several months later, the Republic suspended trade with the Bosnian king due to the establishment of a new monetary system.[1353] Tvrtko II persisted in his approach, and the Ragusan authorities complained

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1347 (2. 3. 1433) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 512-513.

1348 The proposal was not adopted: "de scribendo serenissimo domino nostro imperatorii Romanorum etc. et domino comiti Matco pro arengatis super zecha Bosne et bullis argentis ac nouis", this one was adopted instead: "de induciando" (24. 1. 1435) Cons. Rog. V, 237.

1349 (20. 3. 1436) Lett. di Lev. XII, 18.

1350 Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 65.

1351 (15. 4. 1436) Lett. di Lev. XII, 22v.

1352 (13. 8. 1438) Cons. Rog. VI, 221.

1353 (18. 10. 1438) Lett. di Lev. XII, 108-108v.

throughout 1439.[1354] The Ottoman pressure on Bosnia in December 1438 forced the Ragusan authorities to inform their subjects in the Despotate and Srebrenica that the routes through Duke Stjepan's territory were not safe for merchant transit.[1355] This ban did not last long; it was lifted at the beginning of January 1439.[1356] Ragusans' ambitions to pursue financial gain through trade frequently put their merchants in danger. Following the resumption of trade through Stjepan's territory, the Bosnian noble was forced to defend a caravan against Ottoman forces.[1357]

With the establishment of Ottoman rule over the Despotate in 1439, changes occurred in the economic sector in the region of Bosnia. The traffic along Bosnian roads in the spring of 1440 is attested to by a letter from Ragusa to Queen Elizabeth, mentioning the reduced traffic with the Despotate.[1358] Brief interruptions in trade were recorded at the end of 1440, with constant danger on the roads.[1359] The Ragusans sought to leverage the presence of the Ottomans in the immediate Bosnian vicinity to change the stance of the Bosnian king and nobility. In December 1440, the Ragusan envoys sent to Sultan Murad II were intended to insist on the establishment of the model implemented by the Ottomans in the Despotate and request the sultan to order the Bosnian nobility not to impede Ragusa's trade. The Ragusan envoys failed in their intentions due to the fact that they did not bring tribute. This diplomatic move caused significant damage, leading to the arrest and imprisonment of Ragusan citizens in Bosnia and the Despotate.[1360] The caravan routes through Bosnia, originating from the Despotate, were not safe even from the local population, as demonstrated by the

[1354] (15. 4. 1439) (2. 5. 1439) (15. 6. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 47v, 53, 66.

[1355] "de scribendo merchatoribus nostris existentis in partibus Sclauonie, Strebrenize et Bosne quod non venientur pro tenutas vayode Stipani cum aliquibus merchanciis argentis" (20. 12. 1428) Cons. Rog. VII, 3v.

[1356] "de liberando et franchando mercatores nostros quod possint libere eorum auere et mercantias deferre et conducere per teritoria et tenutas voyuode Stipani" (2. 1. 1439) Cons. Rog. VII, 7.

[1357] (30. 4. 1439) Lett. di Lev. XII, 140.

[1358] (7. 3. 1440) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 430.

[1359] (7. 9. 1440) (14. 9. 1440) (7. 11. 1440) Cons. Rog. VII, 189v, 191, 199.

[1360] Lett. di Lev. XII, 214. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 83. Živković, *Tvrtko II*, 203.

example of the caravan station in Tjentište.[1361] The only remaining option was to once again suspend trade with Bosnia and the Despotate, which the Ragusans implemented in March 1441, only to allow partial trade in fabrics a month later.[1362] A precautionary measure for merchants outside Ragusa was taken in March 1441 when a decision was made to recall merchants from Bosnia and the Despotate to the territory of Ragusa due to the danger posed by the Ottomans.[1363] Furthermore, the Ragusan authorities attempted to influence the establishment of unhindered trade and travel for merchants in Bosnia, the Despotate, and Srebrenica through their envoys.[1364] Following the established pattern, throughout 1441 and the beginning of 1442, merchants were granted special permits to travel.[1365] Concurrently, in November 1441, the Ragusans threatened Tvrtko II with the complete suspension of trade with Bosnia due to the new duties imposed by the Bosnian king on silver exports.[1366] Additionally, the Ragusan

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1361 (24. 9. 1440) Lam. de for. XLI, 1. Sejfudin Isaković, "Tjentište u srednjem vijeku", *Godišnjak* 13, Sarajevo 2013, 365.

1362 (15. 3. 1441) (6. 4. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 239, 250.

1363 "Captum fuit de eundo ad maius consilium pro affidando omnes et singulos merchatores nostros Ragusinos existentes tam in partibus Bosne, Rasie et Sclauonie quam in tenutis Turchorum veniendi Ragusium et eius districtum cum omnibus suis rebus, mercantis, bonis et auere" (5. 3. 1441) Cons. Minus VIII, 240.

1364 "che tutti merchadanti nostri tanto de Schiauonia et de Strebernіza quanto per lo simel dela Bossina et de Romania sono state ligati per li Turchi et intromesso il lor auer della qualschosa ne siemo merauigliar assay rispettande li priuilegi et franchizie che altre fiate sono inpetrati per li ambassadori nostri dello imperadore tra altro che li merchadanti nostri podesse liberamenta usar per tuto li paysi et terre della soa signoria" (22. 3. 1441.) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 16.

1365 (18. 4. 1441) Cons. Rog. VII, 257v. (1. 3. 1442) Isto VIII, 99v. (10. 4. 1441) (18. 4. 1441) (24. 4. 1441) (29. 4. 1441) (6. 5. 1441) (24. 5. 1441) (27. 5. 1441) (9. 6. 1441) (13. 6. 1441) Cons. Minus VIII, 246, 246v, 248, 249v, 250v, 255, 255v, 256, 259, 260, 261. (2. 7. 1441) (6. 7. 1441) (8. 7. 1441) (10. 7. 1441) (11. 7. 1441) (12. 7. 1441) (17. 7. 1441) (18. 7. 1441) (6. 8. 1441) (8. 8. 1441) (11. 8. 1441) (22. 8. 1441) (23. 8. 1441) (4. 9. 1441) (18. 9. 1441) (30. 9. 1441) (2. 10. 1441) (5. 10. 1441) (10. 10. 1441) (12. 10. 1441) (16. 10. 1441) (17. 10. 1441) (14. 11. 1441) (21. 11. 1441) (4. 12. 1441) (18. 12. 1441) (22. 12. 1441) (15. 1. 1442) (17. 3. 1442) (22. 3. 1442) (27. 3. 1442) Cons. Minus IX, 2v-4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 16, 16v, 20v, 21, 22, 25, 25v, 27, 28, 28v-29v, 35, 36v, 40v, 42v, 44, 56, 69v, 70v, 71v.

1366 (18. 11. 1441) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 53v.

authorities faced the issue of silver transport from Bosnia to the Despotate region during this period.[1367]

The way out of the crisis was negotiated by the Ragusans in February 1442 when Sultan Murad II issued them a charter of trading privileges that at least nominally included the territories of Bosnia and the Despotate.[1368] They informed King Tvrtko II, Duke Ivaniš Pavlović, and Duke Stjepan Vukčić about the granted privileges.[1369] Ragusan authorities permitted merchants to travel to Bosnia and the Ottoman-controlled territory of the Despotate in early April in accordance with the guaranteed freedoms. However, the transportation of goods was still dependent on the current situation on the ground.[1370] Despite the occupation of the neighboring Despotate, Ottoman influence over Bosnia was equivalent to the frequency of Ottoman incursions, and the sultan did not represent an authority that could guarantee privileges to the Ragusans in Bosnia. This claim is illustrated by reports of caravans being plundered while traveling from the Despotate through Bosnian territory.[1371] Even Ottoman officials in the occupied towns of the Despotate did not adhere to the agreed privileges, and in January 1443, the Ragusans were forced to file new complaints to Sultan Murad II.[1372] The Ragusans reported to the Hungarian king Władysław that economic conditions were unfavorable on Bosnian roads in the following months.[1373]

[1367] (8. 1. 1442) (15. 1. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 80, 83.

[1368] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 232-234.

[1369] (22. 3. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 108v.

[1370] "de laxando mercatores ire in Bosnam et Sclauoniam" (2. 4. 1442) Cons. Rog. VIII, 113. (10. 4. 1442) (11. 4. 1442) Ibid., 117v, 118v, 119.

[1371] "dum ipse iret in Sclauoniam" (22. 3. 1442) Lam. de for. XV, 130. "dum … mitterent in Nouamonte certam argenti quantitatem et ducatorum ad valorem omnibus predictorum ducatos III^{M}CCC (3. 300) ut circa" (28. 11. 1442) Ibid., XVI, 64v. "fuerunt sexaginta robatores qui interfecerunt ipsum eius fratrem ad confinia terreni despoti et vaiuode Stiepani" (26. 12. 1445) Ibid., XX, 24. Esad Kurtović, "Monte lapidoso-Kameno brdo", in: *Spomenica akademika Sime Ćirkovića*, Istorijski institut, Beograd 2011, 200.

[1372] (12. 1. 1443) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 99-99v.

[1373] (7. 8. 1443) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 443.

In early 1444, a broader diplomatic effort was made regarding trade through Bosnia. The change of power on the Bosnian throne and the accession of King Stjepan Tomaš proved to be a favorable moment for resolving the issue of high customs duties on silver exports.[1374] The conflict between King Tomaš and Duke Stjepan further disrupted the already unstable economic flow in Bosnia. In mid-January, a ban was imposed on merchants passing through the territory of Stjepan Vukčić, and soon after, a ban was also declared on travel to Bosnia and Srebrenica.[1375] As the political situation in Bosnia began to calm in mid-March, the roads were reopened.[1376] The diplomatic activities of the Ragusan envoys at Tomaš's court during the summer resulted in the issuance of a charter confirming privileges that included unhindered trade throughout the territory of Bosnia.[1377] Duke Stjepan continued to confiscate silver from Ragusan caravans as a common practice. The Republic sought to ensure the safety of traffic through the significant Kosača territory through its envoys at Despot Đurađ's in late October 1444.[1378] Diplomatic contacts regarding transport issues through Duke Stjepan's territory remained relevant in the following years.[1379] Stjepan's subjects filed lawsuits in the following years due to the plundering of caravans traveling from the Despotate, indicating the lack of security in the transportation of goods.[1380] Similar lawsuits concerning the plundering

[1374] (7. 1. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 2v. (4. 8. 1444) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 155-155v.

[1375] (11. 1. 1444) (8. 2. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 4, 17.

[1376] (17. 3. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 30.

[1377] (20. 8. 1444) Lett. di Lev. XIII, 158-159. (3. 9. 1444) Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, 238.

[1378] (26. 10. 1444) Cons. Rog. IX, 88v.

[1379] (25. 6. 1445) (18. 3. 1446) Cons. Rog. IX, 166, 227v. See also: Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 113. Ćirković, *Herceg*, 90, 98. Veselinović, "Zabrane i prekidi", 35. Ćošković, *Kraljevina*, 91. Hrabak, "Otimačina", 300.

[1380] "supra Vuchasinum Duchoeuich hominem vaiuode Stiepani, dicens dum ipse Stiepanus iret in Sclauoniam et esset Azznile dictus Vuchasinus venit cum suis hominibus et per vim acepit sibi salmas septem pannorum et quibus fuerunt pani tres de 70 pani 8 de 60 pani 41 de L^{ta} (50) et salmas duas piscium et barilis et udris, unam centuram et curtellesiam cum argento, duas spatas, equm cum sella, unam celadam et unum scutum et de pluri piperem, cartam et alias res minutas que omnia sibi acepit" (15. 3. 1446) Lam. de for. XX, 80. Hrabak, "Otimačina", 300. Kurtović, *Konj*, 688. In Cernica "in contrata voyuode Stipani" Ostoja Dabišinović, Radonja and Vučić Pribisalić robbed Radič and

of caravans from the Despotate also involved the officials of Duke Ivaniš Pavlović.[1381] The strained relations between King Tomaš and Despot Đurađ directly affected the economy of the Despotate, as evidenced by the actions of Duke Tvrtko Stančić, who in February 1446 prevented Ragusan merchants from crossing into the Despotate due to the ban imposed by the Bosnian ruler.[1382]

Following the changes in political relations and safety conditions that occurred in early 1448, when Ottoman troops invaded Bosnia at the request of Despot Đurađ, trade was once again suspended. As of late February, Ragusan authorities prohibited customs clearance of goods that were intended for destinations within Bosnia and the Despotate.[1383] Listening to the news from Bosnia during April 1448, the Ragusans opened the possibility of merchants returning to and departing from Bosnia and the Despotate via the Neretva and Zeta routes.[1384] The Ragusans sought to take advantage of the reconciliation between Duke Stjepan and Despot Đurađ, which took

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Vukša Grubačević who were transporting goods for Despot Đurađ. (4. 7. 1446) Lam. de for. XX, 144v. "Lazarus Michaelis tanquam procurator Milich Bogdanouich ... fecit lamentum supra Dmitar Buchosich qui stat Sub Seuerino in Polimie homo domini cherchech Stiepano, dicens quod cum Radossauus Stiepanouich de Popouo famulus suprascripti Milich aufugisset a dicto Milich et sibi asportasset ducatorum CLXV auri et unum annulum auri in Smedreuo dictus Dmitar abduxit ipsum Radossauum fraudolentur et interfecit illum et accepit dictos ducatorum et annulum" (30. 1. 1449) Lam. de for. XXII, 11. "Ser Jacobus Mar. de Gondola tanquam procurator ser Stefani M. de Crieua … fecit lamentum supra Radoe Vinarich, dicens quod cum dictus ser Stefanus eundo Smedreuum applicuiset in Gorasde dictus Radoe accepit unum equum dicto ser Stefano per vim" (3. 12. 1449) Ibid., 287.

[1381] "supra Vuchich Mursich officialem vayuode Iuanis Paulouich dicens quod istis dibeus proximis de una carauana que eundo in Sclauoniam transibat sub locum dictum Brodar dictus Vuchich accepit unam salmam pannorum que dicitur esse ser Paladini de Lucaris." (8. 9. 1449) Lam. de for. XXII, 192.

[1382] (5. 2. 1446) Div. Not. XXIX, 197. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 43-44.

[1383] (29. 2. 1448) Cons. Rog. IX, 163.

[1384] "retinendi siue comittendi et mandandi mercatoribus nostris quod non vadant nec mittant mercantias aliquas in Bosinam vel Sclauoniam nisi per viam Narenti vel viam Zente. Et similiter scribendi et comittendi mercatoribus nostris in Sclauonia et Bosina existenti quod non debeant venire nec auere nec mercantiam aliquas mittere Ragusium saluo quod per illas duas vias, videlicet, Narenti et Zente donec aliud videbitur et deliberauint dominatione nostra cum consilio rogatorum" (26. 4. 1448) Cons. Rog. X, 184v. "de stando prout stamus super vetatione facta mercatores nostros de non eundo in Bosinam et Sclauoniam nisi per duas vias, videlicet, Zente et Narenti" (27. 4. 1448) Ibid., 186.

place in the summer of 1448, in the following year in order to improve the position of their merchants passing through Duke Stjepan's territories.[1385] However, the new economic measures introduced by Herzog Stjepan in the summer of 1450 could not be stopped even through diplomatic exchanges. A new duty was imposed on livestock passing through Kosača territory from the Despotate and other regions.[1386] The Bosnian noble did not abandon the established measures that significantly enriched his treasury, leading to a total suspension of trade along routes crossing this part of the Bosnian state in July 1450.[1387] Following established practice, special permits were issued for entry into Ragusa through Stjepan's territories. In early August, a Ragusan named Pasqual Sorgo, the *čelnik* of the despot's entourage, obtained such a permit.[1388] In the following period, stricter criteria were introduced for issuing permits for the export of goods through the herzog's territory, resulting in the rejection of requests from merchants from Gluhavica and envoys of Duke Ivaniš Pavlović.[1389] The Ragusan authorities planned to inform King Tomaš about the introduced duties by Herzog Stjepan.[1390] However, Kosača continued with his established practices, leading the Ragusans to once again warn their merchants in Bosnia and the Despotate in December 1450 to avoid traveling through this region.[1391]

The war between the Republic of Ragusa and Herzog Stjepan, which occurred in 1451, resulted in a complete suspension of trade through the Kosača territory.[1392] In January and April of 1451, the Ragusan authorities

[1385] (28. 1. 1449) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 7v-8.

[1386] Ćirković, *Herceg*, 128-129. Ivanović, "Prilozi za istoriju carina", 27.

[1387] (23. 7. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 218v.

[1388] (11. 8. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 224.

[1389] (11. 8. 1450) (12. 9. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 226v, 238v.

[1390] (1. 10. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 243.

[1391] "possendi scribere mercatoribus nostris qui sunt in Bossina et alibi quod non vadant per contratam de cercech nec mittendo cum mercanciis nec denariis." (5. 12. 1450) Cons. Rog. XI, 271. "li mercadanti nostri se trouano et le parte de Bosina che se guardano de vignire ne mandar lo suo auer per li paexe de chercech" (15. 12. 1450) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 54.

[1392] At the end of April, the Senate re-announced the ban on trading through Herzog's territories. (28. 4. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 63.

filed complaints to the court in Buda due to the inability of their merchants to pass through Herzog's territory.[1393] In April 1451, the Ragusans attempted to persuade Despot Đurađ to send a protest to the Porte regarding the ban imposed by Herzog Stjepan, highlighting the impact of this act on his economy.[1394] The complaints addressed to King Tomaš had little effect as well.[1395] During the trade ban, the subjects of the despot enjoyed a somewhat more favorable status with the Ragusan authorities, and permits for exporting goods from Ragusa through the Kosača territory were issued to them on several occasions.[1396] In mid-June 1451, a concession was made allowing herzog's men to export goods from Ragusa to the Despotate.[1397] A similar principle was applied in July 1452 when the export of fabrics, without any customs duties, was permitted to the despot's envoy, Duke Jakša, who purchased them for the despot's nobility.[1398] Throughout the trade ban, the Ragusans sought to maintain trade through alternative routes. In November 1451, a decision was made for merchants to travel to the Despotate *ad viam Gliuistice* (Luštice) with a specified amount of cargo and a specific travel schedule, while discussions were held in 1452 and 1453 about the departure of merchants by ship through Valona and Shkodra.[1399] At the

[1393] (28. 1. 1451) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 475-481, 498.

[1394] (8. 4. 1451) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 70-70v.

[1395] (24. 8. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 126v.

[1396] "de concedendo Radiz Xernoeuich de Tergouiste hominem domini dispoti quod possit extrahere de Ragusio et portare per illam viam que sibi videbitur salmas tres pannorum ipso soluente dohanam consuetam" (5. 8. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 116v. "de consentiendo Louroe de Tergouista possendi extrahere et conducere salmas sex pannorum per terrenum Stiepani cherceni soluendo dohanam" (8. 8. 1451) Ibid., 118v.

[1397] (10. 6. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 78.

[1398] "quod voyuoda Jaxa ambasiator domini despoti possit extrahere illos pannos quos emit pro nobilibus domini despoti sine aliqua gabella soluenda per emptione vel per venditione" (12. 7. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 52.

[1399] "de permittendo ire mercatores nostros cum eorum mercanciis ad viam Gliustice in Sclauoniam"; de permittendo XL[ta] salmas pro volta"; quod addita quod erit prima carauana pannorum ad Gliustizam alia quibus venerit fore possint de hinc recedere usque ad X dies et non ante" (23. 11. 1451) Cons. Rog. XII, 169v. The proposal was not adopted: "de permitendo mercatores nostros ire in Sclauoniam dum modo vadant sine mercantiis et sine aliquo auere, videlicet, per viam Schutari" (6. 5. 1452) Cons.

same time, the Ragusans obtained permission for the transport of goods to Bosnia via Split.[1400] This route was occasionally used for the movement of passengers during the conflict with Herzog Stjepan.[1401] In mid-May 1452, the departure of merchants was allowed through the territories of Duke Juraj Vojsalić, Duke Vladislav, and King Tomaš.[1402] The Ragusans wrote about the new trading conditions to Venice, emphasizing that the transport of goods to Bosnia was carried out via Split, while they were forced to travel by sea to the Despotate.[1403] The more favorable conditions during the temporary cessation of war in early 1452 also conditioned permission for merchants to move through the Kosača territory, although it was a temporary decision.[1404] During the meeting between the Bosnian king and the Serbian Despot in the autumn of 1452, the Ragusans made efforts to improve the position of their merchants, pleading with Đurađ to engage with Tomaš, stating that the problems they faced in Bosnia were detrimental to trade relations with the Despotate.[1405] More stable circumstances for conducting

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Rog. XIII, 5v. "de franchando nostros mercatores quod possint ire cum pannis in Sclauoniam per via de la Valona … cum nauis"; "de franchando omnes ut supra qui volent ire cum suprascripta naui per dictam viam de la Valona in Sclauoniam" (1. 7. 1452) Ibid., 44v. The proposal was not adopted: "de demittendo mercatores ire per viam Scutari." (16. 2. 1452) Ibid, 151.

1400 Neven Isailović, "Četiri pisma iz 1450. i 1451. godine o prometu dubrovačke robe prema Bosni", *MG* XXXV, Beograd 2015, 26-28.

1401 "de permittendo dum Stephanum de Radulino ire in Bosinam per viam Spaleti non portando ducatos nec mercantias" (14. 6. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 31v. "de permittendo Benchum Bratosalich cum eius genero ire in Bosnam per viam Spaleti non portando raubas nel pecuinas" (27. 6. 1452) Ibid., 42.

1402 "de permittendo nostros mercatores qui vadant per Narentem aut per Crainam et Chelmum et inde transeant per teritorium vayuode Vladissaui et regis Bosine et Voysalich, et non per aliam viam" (13. 5. 1452) Cons. Rog. XIII, 9v.

1403 Lett. di Lev. XV, 127-128.

1404 "de permittendo nostros ciues et mercatores ire pro contratam cherzech Stiepani et suos venire Ragusium et ad nostram teritoria" (25. 1. 1452) Cons. Rog. XII, 214v. The proposal was not adopted: "de permittendo mercatores ire per viam Chelmi cum mercantiis" (6. 8. 1452) Ibid., 65.

1405 "E de pui direte al prefato signor despot che li piaza de dir al Re per lo fato de li arzenti tolti ali nostri mercadanti per esso Re segondo per altre nostre vi scussemo non mostrando el signor despot de dir questo a nostra requisitione ma de dir lo da se com quello el qual vien a portar danno per le sue intrate e per lo so paese siando tratati in questa forma li mercadanti perche serare caxon tal nouitade de serar li passi che li mercadanti non andaraueno in paese del dicto signor despot" (12. 9. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 85.

trading activities arose in the summer of 1453, parallel to the negotiations for reconciliation between Herzog Stjepan and Ragusa. Yet, even then, no comprehensive permit was adopted, but rather individual permits and recommendations were issued.[1406] The years-long reduction in trade caused significant financial losses, and in the spring of 1454, the Ragusan envoys were instructed to negotiate the issuance of a charter by which Herzog Stjepan would regulate the freedoms of merchants.[1407] Despite the end of the conflict on the borders of Kosača and Ragusa, problems with trade traffic did not cease. At the end of 1454, the Ragusan authorities were once again compelled to introduce bans and individual permits.[1408]

Political changes in Southeast Europe, caused by Ottoman attacks on the Despotate in 1454, resulted in significant changes in the relationships between states belonging to the Ragusan economic circle. Skilled Ragusan diplomats attempted to take advantage of the more peaceful times following the joint war led by Despot Đurađ and János Hunyadi against the Ottomans. In early November 1454, they pleaded that if reconciliation were to occur, they should engage in efforts to have the sultan send a delegation to Bosnia, which would instruct the Bosnian nobility to adhere to the provisions of previously concluded charters.[1409] However, Ottoman policy towards the Ragusans took a different path. The sultan's envoys ordered Herzog Stjepan to confiscate silver from merchants on his territory in January 1455, which

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[1406] "de permittendo ire nostros mercatores et alios contratam cherzech Stiepani cum pannis lane" (15. 5. 1453) Cons. Rog. XIII, 193v. "de permittendo ire per contratam cherzech Stiepani ad salmas XV pannorum singulis quindecim diebus" (11. 7. 1453) Ibid., 214v. "de permittendo unam salmam pannorum ser Michaelis de Proculo ire per contrata cherzech cum raubis domini despoti ultra salmas XV" (3. 10. 1453) Ibid., 242v. "pro via sua consulendo sibi quod non vadat per territorium de chercech" (10. 11. 1453) Ibid., 257.

[1407] (26. 3. 1454) Cons. Rog. XIV, 38.

[1408] "de deliberando super ordine de argentis que portantur per teritorium chercech Stiepani allato et lecto in presenti consilio" (7. 10. 1454) Cons. Rog. XIV, 92. "de vetando ciuibus nostris Raguseis et aliis qui se pro earum appelatur quod non vadat cum auere per territorium chercech Stiepani et scribendo merchatoribus et ciuibus nostris qui sunt in Srebreniza et alibi quod non veniant cum auere per teritorum chercech Stiepani" (5. 11. 1454) Ibid., 98v. (11. 12. 1454) Ibid., 112.

[1409] (2. 11. 1454) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 563-564.

briefly suspended trade with Bosnia. This practice was soon adopted by the rest of the Bosnian nobility, thereby significantly reducing trade.[1410] The Ragusan authorities established a system of issuing special permits for travel to Bosnia and the Despotate at the beginning of 1455. Most often, permits were granted for merchants to travel without goods for the purpose of concluding previously active business affairs.[1411] In June 1455, Ragusans wrote to their envoys in Naples regarding trade difficulties caused by the Ottoman presence, emphasizing that it was impossible to travel through Bosnian territory or Shkodra.[1412] Ottoman pressure on the Despotate continued throughout 1456, leading to an economic collapse that the Ragusans described vividly to the Pope, highlighting how they were prevented from trading with the despot's state, which was their source of income.[1413] Those were remnants of a bygone era, and trade was dictated by the pace set by the Ottomans in the following years. In the course of time, the Ragusans gradually adjusted to the new circumstances and found counterparts among the Ottoman officials.[1414] By giving gifts to Ottoman governors and providing services in the occupied cities of Bosnia and the Despotate, they sought to secure better conditions for their subjects in these areas.[1415] Nevertheless, they did not dare to declare free movement for their merchants.[1416] They took advantage of more favorable political conditions to inform merchants that they could return to the territory of the Republic.[1417]

1410 (11. 1. 1455) (21. 1. 1455) Cons. Rog. XIV, 121v, 124. (22. 1. 1455) (15. 2. 1455) Lett. di Lev. XVI, 232, 240.

1411 (1. 2. 1455) (21. 2. 1455) Cons. Rog. XIV, 128, 128v, 134v.

1412 (4. 6. 1455) Lett. di Lev. XVI, 201.

1413 "vectigalia nostra maxima ex parte defecerunt territorium cum illustrissimi domini despoti quod nobis ceu peculare fondus erat ab ipsis Turcis occupatur" Lett. di Lev. XVI, 148. Božić, *Dubrovnik i Turska*, 142.

1414 (11. 3. 1456) (6. 4. 1456) Cons. Rog. XIV, 273, 280v.

1415 "de induciando ad prima noua supra facto retinendi mercatores quod ad primus non vadat ad viam Bosne" (3. 4. 1456) Cons. Rog. XIV, 278v.

1416 "de induciando ad prima noua supra facto retinendi mercatores quod ad primus non vadat ad viam Bosne" (3. 4. 1456) Cons. Rog. XIV, 278v.

1417 (19. 9. 1455) Cons. Maius X, 205v. "de dando libertatem domino Rectori et minori consilio quia possint scribere mercatoribus nostris in Bosina quia possint venire Ragusium transendo per teritorium cherzech" (22. 4. 1456) Cons. Rog. XIV, 290v.

Due to the presence of the Ottomans on the Bosnian borders, the Ragusan authorities brought up discussions on several occasions in 1457 regarding the departure of merchants to Bosnia and the Despotate. However, the most they could do to revive the economy was to issue special permits for merchants to travel with small quantities of goods.[1418] The proposal for merchants to travel to Bosnia and the Despotate was unsuccessfully presented to the Ragusan council throughout 1458.[1419] In the following months, the Ragusan authorities once again focused on issuing special permits for merchants to travel to the hinterlands.[1420]

Avoiding the sultan's tribute, the Ragusans found themselves in an unfavorable situation in the late 1450s. The most lucrative trading centers in Bosnia and the Despotate, from which they had accumulated enormous wealth for decades, if not centuries, became inaccessible to their merchants. This was a period in which only small parts of the Despotate managed to withstand Ottoman attacks, while the Ottoman pressure on Bosnia was increasing simultaneously. They had to reach these centers, which had become part of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, in October 1458, the Ragusans agreed to pay an annual tribute.[1421] However, the events of the following year, when Smederevo was conquered, prevented a swift recovery of trade with Bosnia and the Despotate.

[1418] (5. 2. 1457) Cons. Rog. XV, 93v. "de retinendo mercatores nostros cum hauere quod non vadant ad partes Bosne et Sclauonie"; "de retinendo ipsos per totum mensem augusti" (7. 7. 1457) Ibid., 149v. The proposal was not adopted: "de concedendo ser Sigismundo de Georgio quod non obstante inhibitione facta mercatoribus possit per totum mensem augusti proxime futurum mittere in (crossed out: *Bosnam*) Sclauoniam ducatos septingentos" (29. 7. 1457) Ibid., 157v. "de retinendo quod dicti mercatores non vadant ad partes tenute Turchorum saluo quod minus consilium possit ab duo salma infra dimittere" (19. 11. 1457) Ibid., 193v

[1419] (18. 1. 1458) Cons. Rog. XV, 211. "de faciendo gratiam Radiz Bogzinouich quod non obstantibus partibus superioribus diebus captis possit portare ad viam Bosne salmas tres pannorum" (8. 2. 1458) Ibid., 218. "de induciando ad liberandum mercatores nostros possendi portare pannos ad viam Sclauonie et Bosne" (21. 2. 1458) Ibid., 220. The proposal was not adopted: "de faciendo gratiam Matcho partes quod possit extrahere de Ragusio ad viam Sclauonie salmas quatuor pannorum soluendo dohanam", but this proposal was adopted instead: "de non faciendo" (24. 4. 1458) Ibid., 241.

[1420] (6. 2. 1458) (17. 5. 1458) Cons. Rog. XV, 216v, 217, 247v.

[1421] Nedeljković, "Dubrovačko-turski ugovor", 380.

VII

RELATIONS BETWEEN BOSNIA AND THE DESPOTATE THROUGH RELIGIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

VII
RELATIONS BETWEEN BOSNIA AND THE DESPOTATE THROUGH RELIGIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

Examining the complex issue of religious relations between the two states, with territories that have a well-preserved sources, poses an exceptionally challenging task for researchers. Using sparse and fragmented data, based on the knowledge of neighboring states, provides a limited basis for assessing the impulses that led to the development of relations between Bosnia and the Despotate in the religious sphere. The lack of specific historical sources has conditioned the breadth of historiographic publications that often represent a walk on the periphery of understanding, resulting in insufficiently substantiated projections of the past. Within the territorial scope that during the 15th century encompassed the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate, the Bosnian Church, the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the Catholic Church have already existed in the previous centuries. The establishment and development of these religious organizations took place within different political and social frameworks.

Defining confessional spaces

Numerous religious organizations coexisted on the territory ruled by Serbian rulers during the 11th and 12th centuries. During this time period in the state's interior, the Raška episcopate was established under the jurisdiction of the Ohrid Archbishopric. The possessions in Zeta recognized the ecclesiastical authority of the Catholic Bar Archbishopric, while in the coastal regions of Trebinje and Zahumlje, the Ragusan Archbishopric operated.[1422] This state of affairs persisted until 1219/1220 when, shortly after the coronation of the first Serbian king, Stefan Nemanjić, the Serbian Archbishopric was founded with its seat in Žiča. Sava Nemanjić was appointed as the first archbishop, and the domain of the archbishopric was divided into eleven episcopates.[1423] From this time onward, Serbian rulers fully embraced the Orthodox church structure, in contrast to the earlier period when their predecessors maintained close relations with both the Orthodox and Catholic churches. Due to the incursion of the Mongol invaders, the seat of the archbishopric was moved from Žiča to Peć in the mid-13th century.[1424] The change in the state borders of the Serbian Kingdom also led to changes in the archbishop's ecclesiastical jurisdiction.[1425] Significant changes in the organization of the Orthodox Church in Serbia were recorded in the 1340s when, alongside assuming the imperial title, the archbishopric was elevated to the rank of patriarchate, and the previous episcopates were converted

[1422] Đoko Slijepčević, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve (Od pokrštenja Srba do kraja XVIII veka)* I, BIGZ, Beograd 1967, 48. Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije*, 17.

[1423] Sima Ćirković, "Pravoslavna crkva u srednjovekovnoj srpskoj državi", in: *Srpska pravoslavna crkva (1219-1969)-Spomenica o 750-godišnjici autokefalnosti*, Svetog arhijerejskog sinoda srpske pravoslavne crkve, Beograd 1969, 39. Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije*, 30. Radoslav Grujić, *Pravoslavna srpska crkva*, Svetlost, Kragujevac 1989, 18.

[1424] Slijepčević, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 134. Grujić, *Pravoslavna srpska crkva*, 21.

[1425] Ćirković, "Pravoslavna crkva", 41.

into metropolitanates.[1426] By elevating the archbishopric to a patriarchate, driven by the political necessity of establishing an empire, Dušan secured an autocephalous Orthodox Church for his state and lifted the anathema imposed by Byzantium, which was annulled through the actions of Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović in the 1370s.[1427] The disintegration of the Serbian Empire did not destroy the autocephalous church, which found new patrons among the rulers of smaller domains that emerged from the ruins of the Empire. In the 1370s, Prince Lazar assumed the role of protector of the Serbian Patriarchate, which allowed him to solidify his position in relation to other nobles.[1428] In the 15th century, the role of protector and patron of the Serbian Orthodox Church, whose territorial scope changed over time, was assumed by Serbian despots.

Regarding the thematic framework of Bosnian and Serbian religious spaces, the political-religious context of the territories that were formerly part of the Serbian state and subsequently incorporated into Bosnia is particularly interesting. With the establishment of the archbishopric in the territories under the political influence of Serbian kings in 1220, a portion of the Hum region that was within the jurisdiction of this state was incorporated into the Hum episcopate with its center in Ston, subject to the Serbian archbishop. This religious concept persisted until the mid-13th century when the seat of the Hum episcopate was relocated to the Monastery of St. Peter and Paul on the Lim River.[1429] In the subsequent phase of changes in political power over the Hum region, when Bosnian ban Stjepan II Kotromanić annexed this territory to the Bosnian state in the 1320s, the Hum episcopate was suppressed. An indication that this episcopate no longer existed can be seen in King Dušan's charter from 1343, which excluded

[1426] Slijepčević, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 160. Grujić, *Pravoslavna srpska crkva*, 24. Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije*, 63.

[1427] Slijepčević, "Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve", 167-168, 171. Ćirković, "Pravoslavna crkva", 48. Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije*, 77, 82.

[1428] Ćirković, "Pravoslavna crkva", 49.

[1429] Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije,* 35. Nilević, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, 32.

the existence of an episcopal see in the Monastery of St. Peter and Paul.[1430] Further expansion of the Bosnian state into Orthodox religious territory occurred with Tvrtko's conquests in 1373 when parts of Polimlje, including Mileševa, upper Podrinje, and Gacko, were annexed.[1431]

The establishment of Orthodox Church structures in the state of Serbian rulers in the late 12th and early 13th centuries was accompanied by significant events that influenced the later confessional structure of the Bosnian state. In Bosnia at that time, most likely in the 11th century, the Bosnian bishopric was established, initially under the jurisdiction of the Bar Archbishopric, then the Split Archbishopric, and finally, by the 1230s, under the jurisdiction of the Ragusan Archbishopric.[1432] In the early 13th century, the first accusations from Rome against the Bosnian ruler and the church organization in his territory for heresy emerged.[1433] Further accusations of heresy in the Bosnian bishopric came from Rome in the 1230s, leading Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241) to decide in 1232 to remove the Bosnian bishopric from the Ragusan jurisdiction and place it directly under the authority of Rome. At the same time, the Dominican Order was introduced in Bosnia, and a foreign bishop was appointed who preached in Latin.[1434] Although Bosnian ban Matej Ninoslav (1233-1249) nominally accepted this reorganization of the Bosnian bishopric, the mid-13th century saw the relocation of the bishopric's seat to Đakovo due to strong pressure from the Hungarian kings. All subsequent Bosnian bishops resided there until the

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[1430] Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije*, 40. Nilević, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, 34.

[1431] Ćorović, *Kralj Tvrtko I Kotromanić*, 34-36. Ćorović, *Teritorijalni razvoj bosanske države*", 39-40.

[1432] Krunoslav Draganović, "Katolička Crkva u sredovječnoj Bosni", in: *Poviest hrvatskih zemalja Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*, 463-465.

[1433] Srećko Džaja, "Katoličanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini od Kulina bana do Austro-ugarske okupacije", *CCP* XVI/30, Zagreb 1992, 158. Jadranka Neralić, "Srednjovjekovna Bosna u diplomatičkim spisima Rimske kurije", in: *Fenomen "krstjani" u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni i Humu*, 374-376.

[1434] Draganović, "Katolička Crkva u sredovječnoj Bosni", 466-467. Jaroslav Šidak, "*Ecclesia Sclavoniae* i misija dominikanaca u Bosni", in: *Studije o "Crkvi bosanskoj" i bogumilstvu*, Zagreb 1975, 193. Džaja, "Katoličanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini", 157. Salih Jalimam, *Djelatnost dominikanaca u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni*, IPP Hamidović, Tuzla 1999, 68-74.

decline of medieval Bosnia.[1435] The relocation of the episcopal see outside of Bosnia facilitated the further development of teachings that had been characterized as heretical by Rome in previous decades. Filling the void left by the relocation of the bishop to Đakovo, a new church organization called the Bosnian Church was formed in Bosnia, which in the following centuries became the state church of Bosnia.[1436] It represented the merging of the remnants of the organized framework of the Slavic Catholic bishopric with the dualistic monastic organization that resisted church reforms.[1437] Bosnian Church institutionalization reached its culmination in the 1320s, when it emerged on the public scene.[1438] Although they did not participate in the work of the state assembly, representatives of the Bosnian Church actively engaged in the political and social life of the Bosnian state. Prominent members of this religious organization participated in arbitral bodies that determined the offenses committed by the nobility, carried out important diplomatic missions, and some members also had local jurisdiction in parts of the Bosnian state.[1439] The establishment of the Bosnian Church constantly posed a threat to the Roman Church, which took a series of measures to suppress the influence of the Bosnian Christians.

[1435] Djuro Basler, "Ungarn und das bosnische Bistum (1181/85–1247)", *Ungarn Jahrbuch* 5, München 1973, 14. Džaja, "Katoličanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini", 157. Dubravko Lovrenović, "*Translatio sedis* i uspostava novog konfesionalnog identiteta u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni I", in: *Zbornik radova Franjevački samostan u Gučoj Gori*, Kulturno-povijesni institut Bosne Srebrene, Guča Gora-Sarajevo 2010, 114-115.

[1436] Srećko Džaja-Dubravko Lovrenović, "Crkva bosanska (ni bogumilska, ni dualistička nego šizmatička i državna crkva)", *Jukić* 38-39, Sarajevo 2008-2009, 245. Dubravko Lovrenović, "Krist i donator: Kotromanići između vjere rimske i vjere bosanske I. (Konfesionalne posljedice jednog lokalnog crkvenog sukoba)", in: *Fenomen "krstjani" u srednjovjekovnoj Bosni i Humu*, Institut za istoriju-Hrvatski institut za povijest, Sarajevo-Zagreb 2005, 195.

[1437] Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, 444-445.

[1438] Dubravko Lovrenović, "Krist i donator: Kotromanići između vjere rimske i vjere bosanske-II. (Konfesionalne posljedice jednog lokalnog crkvenog raskola)", in: *Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa Tristota obljetnica stradanja samostana i crkve u Olovu (1704-2004)*, Franjevačka teologija, Sarajevo 2008, 17.

[1439] Sima Ćirković, "Bosanska crkva u bosanskoj državi", *Prilozi za istoriju Bosne i Hercegovine*, "Društvo i privreda srednjovjekovne bosanske države", Sarajevo 1987, 205. Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, 129-133.

In addition to the establishment of the Bosnian Church, the establishment of the Bosnian Franciscan Vicariate in 1339/1340 also had an impact on the confessional landscape of the Bosnian state. It was under the jurisdiction of the head of the Franciscan order.[1440] The Franciscans in Bosnia were primarily concerned with propagating the Catholic faith and converting the Bosnian population to Catholicism. In the following decades, new monasteries were established, further strengthening the activities of the Franciscans.[1441] The active presence of Bosnian Franciscans is evidenced by a census from the 1370s, which states that the Bosnian Vicariate already had 7 custodies with 35 monasteries at that time.[1442] With this concept, established in the mid-14th century in the Bosnian region, the Bosnian Church acted strongly as an independent religious organization, and the Franciscans were subject to the Roman Church. Over time, the Bosnian Church gained a significant rival in the Franciscans. This church organization became a burden for Bosnian rulers. The threat from the Ottoman Empire, the strong activities of the Franciscans, and the pressure from the Roman popes gradually pushed Bosnian kings and the nobility closer to the Catholic Church. One specific method used by the Catholic Church to consolidate its position in Bosnia can be seen in the short-lived attempt to establish the Srebrenica-Visoko Bishopric. The process, initiated in the 1440s, with the public acceptance of Catholicism by Tvrtko II and Stjepan Tomaš, culminated two decades later with the expulsion of the followers of the Bosnian Church in 1459 and the crowning of Stjepan Tomašević with

[1440] Julijan Jelenić, *Kultura i bosanski franjevci*, I, Prva hrvatska tiskara Kramarić i M. Raguz, Sarajevo 1912, 32. Dominik Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, Hrvatski povijesni institut, Rim 1968, 43. Jaroslav Šidak, "Franjevačka *Dubia* iz g. 1372/1373. kao izvor za povijest Bosne", in: *Studije o "Crkvi bosanskoj" i bogumilstvu*, 231. Marijan Žugaj, "Bosanska vikarija i franjevci konventualci", *CCP* XIII/24, Zagreb 1989, 6-8. Even before the establishment of the vicariate, Franciscans sporadically visited Bosnia on various missions. Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, 39-43.

[1441] Pavao Anđelić, "Pogled na franjevačko graditeljstvo XIV i XV vijeka u Bosni", in: "*Srednjovjekovna Bosna i Evropska kultura*", 201-202. Fadila Memišević, "Rad franjevaca u Bosni do dolaska Turaka", *Radio Sarajevo*, Treći program 15, Sarajevo 1976, 341. Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, "Franjevci u gradskim naseljima srednjovjekovne Bosne", *Radovi HDZU* III, Zagreb 1995, 33-34.

[1442] Jelenić, *Kultura i bosanski franjevci*, 37. Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, 127-135.

the crown from Rome in 1461.[1443] According to a census from the second half of the 14th century, the Bosnian Franciscan Vicariate also encompassed the territory of the Despotate, where the Mačvan and Bulgarian custodies were located. The Franciscans from the medieval Bosnian region had direct instructions to actively operate in the Despotate as well. In early 1444, Pope Eugene IV sent the Vicar of the Bosnian Franciscans, Fabijan, to announce the details of the union of churches, in other states as well as in the Despotate.[1444] The following year, Eugene IV recommended the Bosnian Franciscans to the "ruler of Raška," referring to the Despotate, emphasizing that the Bosnian Franciscans had a wide range of activities, including in those territories.[1445]

Defining the confessional spaces encompassing the medieval Bosnian and Serbian states reveals how the state borders between these two states conditioned the different church structure organization. There is a difference in starting point as a result of the general division between the Catholic West and the Orthodox East. While a structured organization of the Orthodox Church took root in the territory of the Serbian state from the second decade of the 13th century, culminating in an independent patriarchate from the mid-14th century onwards, the territory of Bosnia saw the simultaneous coexistence of organized forms of the Bosnian Church and the Catholic Church through the Franciscan Vicariate from the mid-14th century onwards. Changing state borders also led to changes in confessional patterns, as can be seen, for example, in the expansion of the Bosnian state under Stjepan II, which culminated in the withdrawal and abolition of the Hum Bishopric. The organized church structure associated with the Serbian Orthodox Church did not survive the territorial expansion of Bosnia, and Orthodoxy was maintained at the local level in strong competition with the organized Bosnian Church and the Catholic Church. Although

[1443] Lovrenović, "Krist i donator: Kotromanići između vjere rimske i vjere bosanske II", 27-47.

[1444] Spremić, *Despot*, 338.

[1445] Theiner, *Vetera monumenta* II, 223, 229. Momčilo Spremić, "Odnos između pravoslavnih i rimokatolika u Srpskoj despotovini", in: *Prekinut uspon. Srpske zemlje u poznom srednjem veku*, 397.

the activities of the Orthodox Church in the Serbian state were closely tied to the ruling figure, the coronation of Tvrtko I in 1377 did not lead to the integration of the Orthodox Church into the royal court or its inclusion in the political life of the Bosnian Kingdom. As a result, Tvrtko I and all other Bosnian kings are not recorded in the tradition of the Orthodox Church, which, after the collapse of the Serbian Empire, aligned itself with regional Serbian rulers and later Serbian despots, remaining organizationally tied to the territory of the Despotate.

Data from church records and chronicles

According to the overall picture, there were two distinct feudal confessional spaces where different religious denominations and church organizations existed, but their permeability, flow across state borders, and ability to communicate effectively were limited. Through church records, it is possible to identify several elements that indicate the stance of the clergy of one Church towards another. The references are brief and fragmentary, making it impossible to reconstruct a broader picture of the religious relations between the church organizations and dignitaries in Bosnia and the Despotate during that period.

There are three variants of transcripts from the late 14th century known as the "S'bor pravoverija" that provide insight into the perceptions of Orthodox clergy members about the Bosnian Church. These transcripts are known as the Pljevlja, Dečani, and Zagreb Synodicons. Aside from the established integral parts of the Pljevlja Synodicon, reference is made to evil heretics, thrice-cursed *babuni*, who mock the true faith and distort the interpretation of religious books. These *babuni* separate themselves from the orthodox church, ridicule the holy and venerable cross, and the venerable icons. The text goes on to specifically name individuals or groups of people who are anathematized and cursed on this occasion. Thus, all those who mock and do not venerate the aforementioned cross and icons are cursed, as well as those who believe in the faith of *babuni* and worship them. Those who welcome them into their land, provide them with food, and those who do not curse these heretics are also cursed. The list of persons explicitly cursed in this document includes the names of Rastudije of Bosnia, Radomir, Dražilo, Tolko, Tvrtko, and Tvrdoš, as well as all other *krstjans*, both men and women who are adherents of the Bosnian Church. After mentioning these names, in a different handwriting, among the names on the list

of those who were cursed it was later added the name of the Herzog's *gost* Radin.[1446] It can be concluded based on the watermarks that this transcript dates from the last quarter of the 14th century, as do the other two synodicons.[1447] Although the creation of these transcripts took place shortly before the establishment of the Despotate, the inserted text about the curse on *gost* Radin faithfully illustrates how the Pljevlja Synodicon was used in practice in the 15th century, probably during the time when *gost* Radin lived as a well-known and influential dignitary of the Bosnian Church.

In the second transcript of the Serbian Synodicon called the Zagreb Synodicon, which was also created in the last quarter of the 14th century, a broad range of cursed individuals is mentioned. In addition to the general anathema, specific curses are directed at Belizmenc, Rastudije, Dražilo, *gost* Rastina, priest Tvrdoš, Dobrko, Radosim, Tvrtko, priest Braten, priest Drug, Hoteš, as well as all Bosnian and Hum heretics. Furthermore, Voihna, Prijezda, Nelipac, Stogšin, Boroje, Lepčin, and all those who believed in them and followed them were also cursed. The Zagreb text has a significant addition that is absent in the other two transcripts, where Vučko, Grubeša's father, and his mother Radoslava and Nerad's grandmother Gradislava are cursed. Of particular importance is that in this addition, Ban Stefan and Protomara, his daughter-in-law, were cursed.[1448] Unlike the described Pljevlja and Zagreb Synodicons, the Dečani Synodicon, in addition to the established curses and almost the same list of heretics being cursed, contains significant information about Bosnian nobles from the late 14th century. In this text, Vlah Dobrovojević, Vlah Opanković, and his brother Beloš are

[1446] Jovan Mitrović, "O prokletstvu na babune", *Bosanska vila* 1/9, Sarajevo 1894, 167-168. Previously, parts of the synodical text were published in: Sava Kosanović, "Srpske starine u Bosni", *Glasnik* SUD XII, Beograd 1871, 173-175. Details about this document in: Vladimir Mošin, "Rukopis pljevaljskog sinodika pravoslavlja", *Slovo* 6/8, Zagreb 1957, 154-176. Владимир А. Мошин, "Сербская редакция Синодика в неделю православия", *Византи́йский Временни́к* XVII, Moskva-Leningrad 1960, 301-302. Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, 39.

[1447] Aleksandar Solovjev, "Svedočanstva pravoslavnih izvora o bogomilstvu na Balkanu", *GID BiH* V, Sarajevo 1953, 52-58.

[1448] Franjo Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani u povijesnim vrelima*, Barbat, Zagreb 1975, 312-314. Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, 39-40.

cursed and anathematized.[1449] Prince Vlah Dobrovojević is mentioned in several charters of Ban Tvrtko between 1353 and 1370. In these documents, he is referred to as a witness from Bosnia and Usora, with a slightly modified name of Vlađ. According to established historiographical constructions, Vlah's son could be Tvrtko Vlađević, a *stavilac* at the court of King Tvrtko I Kotromanić.[1450]

An interesting indication about Orthodox dignitaries is offered by a gloss in the Vrutočko Gospel, believed to have been created in the 15th century. Below the integral text of the Four Gospels, there is an added gloss in a black frame which reads: "**мѣтница, мѣсто патиѣрьхово идѣже се патиѣрьхъ ставе сребромь и златомь.**"[1451] This addition to the text of the gospel tries to show the circumstances of the time in the Serbian Orthodox Church when, according to the author, bribery was used to reach the position of patriarch. It is difficult to contextualize this short passage with a broader historical context due to the lack of other sources. According to one historiographical interpretation, an attempt was made to associate the creation of this Gospel with the border region between Bosnia and the Despotate. However, a detailed analysis of the language used in the document has dismissed such an enticing scenario.[1452]

The exclusion of political dissidents based on religious context was demonstrated in Serbian chronicles during the takeover of the Despotate by Stjepan Tomašević, when it was recorded **изьгнаше господина Стефана изь Ѿчьства родитєль своихъ трькьѣти и злочьстньи невѣрници.**[1453]

[1449] Serafim Ristić, *Dečanski spomenici*, Beograd 1864, 26. Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, 40.

[1450] Srđan Rudić, "Povelja bana Tvrtka Kotromanića knezu Vlatku Vukoslaviću", *SSA* 2, Beograd 2003, 76. Jelena Mrgić-Radojčić, "Povelja bana Tvrtka kojom potvrđuje baštinske posjede knezu Vlatku Vukoslaviću", *SSA* 4, Beograd 2005, 110.

[1451] Radoslav Grujić, "Jedno jevanđelje bosanskog tipa XIV-XV veka u južnoj Srbiji", in: *Zbornik lingvističkih i filoloških rasprava u čast A. Beliću o 40-godišnjici njegova naučnog rada posvećuju njegovi prijatelji i učenici*, Beograd 1937, 262-298. Ćirković, "Bosanska crkva u bosanskoj državi", 213. Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, 36. Herta Kuna, *Srednjovjekovna bosanska književnost*, Forum Bosnae 45, Sarajevo 2008, 110-113.

[1452] Grujić, "Jedno jevanđelje", 264-265. Kuna, *Srednjovjekovna bosanska književnost*, 110.

[1453] Stojanović, *Rodoslovi*, 244.

The unreliability of statements in annals, biographies, and chronicles is also illustrated by a piece of information provided by the Ragusan chronicler Giacomo Luccari in the early 17th century. In his chronicle, Lukarević stated that Bosnian King Tvrtko (without specifying whether it refers to Tvrtko I or Tvrtko II), Sandalj Hranić, Radoslav Pavlović, and Despot Đurađ Branković were members of the Nestorian heresy.[1454]

[1454] Lvccari, *Copioso*, 90.

The Serbian Orthodox Church and the Bosnian Kingdom (1402-1459)

The problem of determining traces of the Serbian Orthodox Church's structural organization on the territory of the Bosnian state in the 15th century still remains insufficiently explored. Previous historiographical publications, which posed this problem as a primary scientific task, did not result in projections that would clearly define the potential existence of the structure of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Bosnia.[1455] Scarce and limited sources have influenced interpretations according to which the organization of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Bosnia during the 15th century was observed through sources from the 14th century, when Bosnian rulers had no authority in certain parts of the later Kingdom of Bosnia. Mapping such patterns and constructing a historical framework based on personal reflections without a strong foundation in sources have resulted in uniform perceptions.[1456]

The first written evidence of a specific institutional form of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the territory of medieval Bosnia relates to the Mileševa Metropolitanate. According to the account of Mavro Orbini, the abbot of Mljet, Bosnian ruler Tvrtko I Kotromanić was crowned in the Mileševa Monastery, and the coronation was performed by the Mileševa Metropolitan.[1457] Historiography has already provided extensive analyses of this account. The historical studies of this issue have deconstructed the thesis of Tvrtko's coronation in Mileševa through an analysis of the chronicle itself, which states that Ban Stjepan II was buried in the Franciscan Church of

[1455] Nilević, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, 40-87.

[1456] Janković, "Episkopije i mitropolije", 83, 89-91. Janković, "Crkvena organizacija na teritoriji Kosača", 494-505.

[1457] Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 151.

St. Nicola in Mileševa in Bosnia, which he had built during his lifetime,[1458] as well as through archaeological research.[1459] Orbini's information about Tvrtko's coronation has served certain authors in constructing the thesis that a new metropolitanate with its seat in the Mileševa Monastery emerged in the former territory of the Bishopric of Dabar in the second half of the 14th century.[1460] According to some interpretations, this new metropolitanate had jurisdiction over the Orthodox population of Bosnia.[1461] According to the charter referring to the donation of Mileševa Monastery in the early decades of the 15th century, Despot Stefan Lazarević does not mention Mileševa as an episcopal, metropolitan, or any other center. The charter was issued no earlier than 1413, and it granted five villages in Moravica to the Mileševa Monastery: two places with the same name of Gugalj, Hrasno Polje, Šemgonj, and Rupeljevo. An additional feature of this charter is that the inhabitants of these villages were exempt from paying certain duties, that is, two years from *unča*, five years from minor and major labor, military service, and construction work.[1462] In this document, Mileševa is not mentioned as a component of any other potential Metropolitanates of the Orthodox Church.[1463] The Mileševa Monastery, or the Mileševa Church, is mentioned in 1413 as a destination for caravans.[1464]

[1458] Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 147, 151.

[1459] Pavao Anđelić, "Krunidbena i grobna crkva bosanskih vladara u Milima (Arnautovićima) kod Visokog", *GZM* (A) Nova serija XXXIV/1979, Sarajevo 1980, 183-239. An overview of the historiography on the location of the coronation of King Tvrtko I and historical-archaeological research in Mili in: Dejan Zadro, "Franjevačka crkva i samostan sv. Nikole u srednjovjekovnim Milima (Arnautovići kod Visokog)", *Prilozi* 33, Sarajevo 2004, 55-99.

[1460] Ćirković, "Pravoslavna crkva", 49. Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije*, 54, 89.

[1461] Grujić, *Pravoslavna srpska crkva*, 42.

[1462] Trifunović, *Despot Stefan Lazarević*, 150-151. Blagojević, "Despot Stefan Lazarević i Mileševa", 172-174.

[1463] Janković,"Crkvena organizacija na teritoriji Kosača", 499. It would be difficult to expect that by the late 14th and early 15th centuries there would have been the establishment and then the abolition of the Mileševa Metropolitanate since, according to preserved sources, there was no territorial border shifting in this area at that time.

[1464] Dinić, "Karavanska trgovina", 122.

During a time when the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate both failed as state structures, within the diminished territory of Herzog Stjepan Kosača, who resisted the Ottoman attacks for a certain period, the Mileševa Metropolitan David was mentioned several times. The first mention of Metropolitan David is directly related to the drafting of Stjepan's testament. In addition to David, *gost* Radin and knight Pribislav Vukotić were present during this act. In his testament at the end of May 1466, Herzog Stjepan refers to Metropolitan David as his servant and *courtier*, a monk in whom he trusts and relies upon to fulfill the role assigned to him.[1465] When explaining the events surrounding the creation of Herzog's testament, Pribislav Vukotić emphasized to the Ragusan rector how the honorable man, Sir Metropolitan David, composed the will. Metropolitan David also spoke before the Ragusan rector Damian Menze and other nobles about the origin of this testament. In an early June 1466 document, the Ragusans presented him as a servant of God, the honorable man David, Metropolitan of Mileševa, while David identified himself as a servant of Herzog Stjepan.[1466] In one draft of a Ragusan document regarding Herzog Stjepan's deposit, it is mentioned that the deposit was counted in the presence of Sir Metropolitan David.[1467] In June 1466, the Ragusan authorities made a decision to compose a response to an unnamed metropolitan and Radoje Kranović, the envoys of Herzog Stjepan's wife and son,[1468] most likely referring to Metropolitan David.

After the death of Herzog Stjepan, Metropolitan David remained at the court of his successors, Herzog Vlatko and Prince Stjepan. In January 1470, he was still residing at the Kosača court in Novi. He was noted as an envoy of the Kosača brothers, delivering a specific portion of their inheritance from Ragusa, and as a scribe of a charter confirming the Ragusans' acceptance of the inheritance.[1469] Several months later, in May 1470, David is mentioned

[1465] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 89. Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, 27, 195.

[1466] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma*, I/2, 90-92. Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, 363.

[1467] (5. 6. 1466) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 85.

[1468] (4. 6. 1466) Cons. Rog. XIX, 61.

[1469] (26. 1. 1470) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 188.

again in a document regarding the takeover of the Kosača's inheritance for Vlatko and Stjepan.[1470] In May 1470, Metropolitan David and Pribisav Crepović were granted permission by the Ragusan authorities to freely enter Ragusa with all their belongings.[1471] The last known information about Metropolitan David dates back to 1472 when the Ragusans provided him with transportation to Poreč by boat.[1472] Based on the preserved data in several presented documents, it is evident that Metropolitan David resided in Novi at the court of Herzog Stjepan in the late 1460s. However, apart from his titular presence, there is no document illustrating his presence in Mileševa, nor is he associated with issues related to church matters. An earlier source indicates the incursion of the Ottoman army when Mileševa Monastery was burned and looted in 1459.[1473] The 1477 census of the Herzegovina Sanjak mentions Mileševa Monastery and its monks, but even in this document, Mileševa is not mentioned as the center of any church unit.[1474]

Certain authors have attempted to demonstrate, by replicating the matrix from the 13th and 14th centuries, that the Monastery of St. Nicola in Banja and the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul on the Lim River were significant church centers through which the influence of the Serbian Orthodox Church manifested itself on the territory of Bosnia in the 15th century. Discussing the relocation of earlier episcopal centers without consulting primary sources, the reorganization of the Orthodox Church on the territory of Sandalj Hranić is also mentioned.[1475] As far as the religious activities of these two church centers in the 15th century are concerned, only one piece of information from 1442 has been preserved, referring to the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

[1470] (21. 5. 1470) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/2, 87.

[1471] (2. 5. 1470) Cons. Rog. XX, 265v.

[1472] Nilević, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, 72.

[1473] Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stari srpski hrisovulji, akti, biografije, letopisi, spomenici, pomenici, zapisi, itd.*, Spomenik SKA III, Beograd 1890, 152.

[1474] *Poimenični popis sandžaka vilajeta Hercegovina*, ed: Ahmed Aličić, Orijentalni institut, Sarajevo 1985, 598. Mehmed Spaho, "Nekoliko turskih dokumenata o manastiru Mileševo", *POF* 28-29, Sarajevo 1980, 364-365.

[1475] Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije*, 83-84. Janković, "Crkvena organizacija na teritoriji Kosača", 496-500.

and Metropolitan Filotej.[1476] Sources do not associate the activities of Metropolitan Filotej with the territory of Bosnia. Ragusan sources indicate that the Church of St. Peter was part of the Despotate in the 15th century.[1477] It is more difficult to determine to which state the Monastery of St. Nicola and the Banja region belonged, due to frequent border shifts in this area and different statements in the sources. In November 1397, the region of St. Nicola in Banja was indicated as being in Bosnia, while in July 1405, the Church of St. Nicola is mentioned as a place in the Despotate.[1478]

The activities of the bishop of the Orthodox Church on the territory of Bosnia are depicted in a letter from the Patriarch of Constantinople, Gennadius II Scholarius, addressed to the monks of Mount Sinai in response to their inquiry regarding the acceptance of gifts sent to them by Herzog Stjepan. The document is approximately dated to the time of Gennadius' pontificate, between 1453 and 1459.[1479] Patriarch Gennadius advises the monks that they can accept the gifts of the herzog without feeling guilty or remorseful. The document also mentions the Bishop of Bosnia, explicitly stating that he is both Orthodox and Serbian, and that he was converting the population on the territory of Herzog Stjepan Kosača to Orthodoxy.[1480] It is difficult to reconcile Gennadius' statements about the Orthodox bishop with the existence of organized and institutional activities of the Orthodox Church on Bosnian territory, given that no specific church center is mentioned on Bosnian territory to which the bishop would be closely associated. Due to a lack of sources, these statements still leave this question open.

[1476] Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, 89.

[1477] Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 584, 654.

[1478] Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 398, 514-515.

[1479] The document has been preserved and published in several forms. Lj. Kovačević published in the 19th century a Slavic transcription of Gennadius' letter from the 16th century. Recently, the original and the translation were published by F. Šanjek. Ljubomir Kovačević, "Odgovor carigradskog patrijarha Đenadija II na pitanje sinajskih kaluđera", *Glasnik* SUD 63, Beograd 1985, 12-13. Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani*, 320-323. Augustin Pavlović, "Katolici i pravoslavni u našim krajevima prema grčkim vrelima iz 15. stoljeća", *CCP* XIV/25, Zagreb 1991, 95-97.

[1480] Kovačević, "Odgovor carigradskog patrijarha Đenadija II", 12-13. Šanjek, *Bosansko-humski krstjani*, 320-323.

A later reference from the 1450s, mentioning the activities of the Metropolitan of Raška on the territory of medieval Bosnia, has led to different interpretations.[1481] In a statement addressed to Pope Callixtus III in April 1455, the vicar John of Capistrano complained about the Rašans who were converting Bosnian heretics to Orthodoxy, disrupting the work of Bosnian Franciscans. He also emphasized that many of them were dying outside of the faith because they refused to accept Orthodoxy. Specific accusations were directed at the Metropolitan of Raška, who, according to John of Capistrano, played a significant role in these activities.[1482] John of Capistrano's statement does not explicitly mention the specific part of Bosnia where these events took place, but it is reasonable to assume that it was in the border region of the Bosnian state, considering the mention of the Metropolitan of Raška, who apparently resided on the territory of the Despotate.

In the late 1450s, we observe a significant event in which Bosnian King Stjepan Tomaš exerted a certain influence over the churches in the Despotate. During the negotiations for the marriage between Bosnian Prince Stjepan Tomašević and the daughter of Despot Lazar, the Bosnian king confirmed secular authority over the churches in the Despotate to the Grand Logothete Stefan Ratković.[1483] The fact that, prior to being chosen as the despot, the Bosnian king was in a position to confirm the rights of the Grand Logothete, who had secular authority over the churches and church properties in the Despotate, to some extent illustrates his influence on the churches in this context.

[1481] Milenko Filipović arbitrarily claimed that it was the Metropolitan from Srebrenica. Milenko Filipović, "Počeci i prošlost zvorničke eparhije", *Bogoslovlje* VIII, Beograd 1964, 6. Ćirković, *Istorija*, 319. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 192-193.

[1482] "Multis ex illis haereticis Bosnensibus, qui fidem tenuerunt Patharenorum (et) audientes verbum Dei, convertuntur ad fidem romanam; sed a metropolitano Rascianorum et aliis non permittuntur reconciliari; de quibus multi moriuntur extra fidem, magis volentes extra fidem mori, quam eorum Rascianorum fidem suscipere." (4. 7. 1455) Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, 225. Ćošković, *Crkva bosanska*, 101.

[1483] Rački, "Prilozi", 156.

Srebrenica in the 15th century: At the crossroads of religious influence

Srebrenica's population grew as the urban center developed and opportunities for earning a living increased. The influx of the Ragusans, the arrival of Saxons, and frequent changes in ownership of Srebrenica contributed to the formation of an ethnically diverse urban population with different religious beliefs. With the presence of people from different faiths during the first half of the 15th century, both Catholic and Orthodox religious buildings were simultaneously constructed and maintained in Srebrenica.

The first indication of church construction in Srebrenica dates back to May 1413 when stonemasons Ivan Petrović and Božidar Bogdanović committed to travel to Srebrenica and complete the construction of a local church.[1484] Considering that this was a continuation of work on the church at the invitation of a local Ragusan Stjepko Pavlović, it is certain that this case involved a Catholic church. It is not an isolated case. In May 1453, representatives of the Franciscan monastery in Srebrenica hired two stonemasons and one sculptor from Ragusa to build a church, a stone furnace, and perform other tasks.[1485] The presence of the Ragusans throughout the hinterland and in urban environments left a trace of their Catholic affiliation through their support of church construction. A large number of documents, especially testaments,

[1484] "Iuan Petrouich petrarius et Bosidar Bogdanouich promiserunt et se solemniter obligauerunt Stiepcho Paulouich presenti et acceptanti ire ad partes Sclauonie ad locum Srebernize et ibi laborare de arte sua petrarie bene et fideliter donec explebunt quandam ecclesiam ibi incepta et facere omnia que spectabunt et pertinebunt ad artem suam petrarie ad complementum dicte ecclesie." (15. 5. 1413) Div. Canc. XXXIX, 257. Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 651.

[1485] "procuratores Conuentus fratrum de Srebreniza, conduxerunt et accordauerunt Vitchum Radossalich et Iuan Cheruaucich, petrarios, et Radouanum Cheruaucich smaratorem. Promittentes dicti Vitchus, Iuan et Radouanus dictis procuratoribus, presentibus et acceptantibus, de eundo in Srebrenizam et ibi facere unam calchariam de calce et murare unam ecclesiam et facere alia laboreria ad voluntatem et prout volent guardianus et alii fratres dicti conuentis laborando continue diligenter et solicite singula die non feriata." (5. 5. 1453) Div. Not. XXXVIII, 52.

indicate the existence of Catholic priests and churches in Srebrenica, with the Church of St. Mary standing out in particular.[1486] The next piece of information about churches in Srebrenica relates to the uprising of 1427 when numerous Ragusans were killed in retaliation by Stefan. In a letter sent in April 1427 to the envoy of Despot Stefan, the Ragusan authorities described these events and mentioned how their citizens sought refuge in the fortress and his churches,[1487] which could indicate Orthodox buildings.

The presence of Orthodox clergy in Srebrenica is indicated by records of legal disputes mentioning monk Milobrat, priest Božićko, and Ljubisava, the wife of an Orthodox priest.[1488] An interesting example is priest Božićko, who was mentioned several years earlier in Zvonik and Podzvonik.[1489] Several sources from the first half of the 15th century, in earlier publications, have been associated with the existence of institutional organization of the Orthodox Church in Srebrenica.[1490] During diplomatic correspondence between Ragusa and Despot Stefan regarding the issue of merchants in Srebrenica in November 1415, the Ragusan authorities decided to address Despot Stefan and an unnamed metropolitan.[1491] From the instructions given to the envoy Marin Gradi, it can be observed that it concerned Metropolitan Isidor, to whom the Ragusan authorities expressed gratitude for his engagement with the Despot.[1492] The mention of the metropolitan in connection with the situation in Srebrenica led to an erroneous association with the existence of a Srebrenica metropolitan, which Milenko Filipović mistakenly made. Later discussions on this subject also conveyed these

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1486 Kovačević-Kojić, *Gradska naselja*, 285-286, 288. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 87, 88, 140, 141, 143.

1487 "Ma come innocenti si redusseno in questa sua fortuna alla ombra della vostra serenita come de lor signore et patrone, zoe in lo castello et borgo et ghiesie vostre" Lett. di Lev. X, 13v.

1488 (13. 6. 1426) (11. 10. 1434) (28. 4. 1442) (14. 10. 1447) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 176, 315, 465, 532.

1489 (8. 4. 1428) (5. 5. 1428) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 212, 213.

1490 Filipović, "Počeci i prošlost zvorničke eparhije", 5-6. Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije*, 91. Spremić, *Despot*, 551. Kalić, *Srbi u poznom srednjem veku*, 119. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 192-193.

1491 (30. 11. 1415) Cons. Rog. I, 29v.

1492 Lett. di Lev. XVII, 141v.

claims.[1493] Several other cases illustrate a similar principle of Ragusan diplomacy. In February 1416, the Ragusans complained to Despot Stefan about thefts committed against their merchants in Srebrenica. According to the instructions regarding the issue in Srebrenica, the Ragusan delegation was supposed to address the unnamed metropolitan, who had previously offered his services to the Republic, and they carried a special letter for him.[1494] In mid-November 1417, the Ragusan delegation, which was sent to Despot Stefan regarding the problem in Srebrenica, was again supposed to address Metropolitan Isidor, who was believed to be present at the court.[1495] In the presented cases, it was most likely referring to Metropolitan Isidor from Belgrade, who appears in domestic sources at the beginning of 1423.[1496] In some cases, Ragusan diplomacy relied on the assistance of high-ranking officials of the church. One such case is recorded in August 1427 when the Ragusan authorities sent letters to Đurađ Branković and the patriarch.[1497] In a document regarding the liquidation of a merchant guild consisting of three Ragusans in Srebrenica in February 1428, among the debtors, despot Đurađ and Filip, a servant of the metropolitan, are mentioned among others.[1498] The broader list of debtors and the nature of this document indicate

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[1493] Filipović, "Počeci i prošlost zvorničke eparhije", 5. In her monograph on Srebrenica, Desanka Kovačević-Kojić gave an imprecise interpretation that the sources "confirm the existence of the Orthodox Church." Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 149-150. In other publications, the same author leaves "the possibility that Srebrenica was the seat of the Metropolitanate." Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, *Gradski život u Srbiji i Bosni (XIV-XV)*, Istorijski institut, Beograd 2007, 217.

[1494] (22. 2. 1416) Lett. di Lev. VII, 148. Ćorović, "Srebrenica za vlade despota Stevana", 64.

[1495] "Et ancora secum metropolito Isidoro vi trouasse per lo camino o in corte presentateli la letera di credenza et salutatelo per parte nostra relegrandoni della suoa sanita et prosperita." (9. 11. 1417) Lett. di Lev. VI, 157v.

[1496] (1. 1. 1423) Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 231. See: Jireček, *Istorija Srba* II, 395-396. In the period from 1459 to 1462, the authorities in Ragusa discussed the deposit of the Metropolitan of Belgrade. (19. 7. 1459) (11. 8. 1459) (22. 8. 1460) (20. 4. 1461) Cons. Rog. XVI, 59v, 65, 171v, 248v. (14. 9. 1461) (27. 12. 1461) (29. 12. 1461) (11. 2. 1462) (13. 2. 1462) (5. 3. 1462) (8. 3. 1462) (13. 3. 1462) Cons. Rog. XVII, 11, 37v, 38, 56, 56v, 64, 65v, 68v.

[1497] "de firmando literas ad dominum Georgium Volcouich et ad patriarcham lectas in presenti consilio" (1. 8. 1427) Cons. Rog. IV, 31v.

[1498] Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 149.

that it pertains to a merchant guild with broader operations that were not limited to Srebrenica.

An interesting example of using religious context to discredit opponents is preserved in a transcript of the Hagiography of Despot Stefan Lazarević. Describing the rebellion in Srebrenica, the author mentions that all people of Srebrenica were adherents of the Bogomil heresy. This is a later interpolation in the text, as evident from the comparison itself. While the original text of the despot's hagiography mentions the town of Srebrenica with the phrase **в ньєм же сребродєлци множство**, in this (Grigorovič's) version, it states that all were **вси ьереси богомилсꙋье**. Currently, this transcript is considered lost and the information regarding the Bogomils in Srebrenica is preserved only in Grigorovič's text.[1499] The inability to access the document has led some scholars to doubt the authenticity of this source, thereby marginalizing the significance of the information contained within it.[1500] In contrast, some researchers, such as Alexander Soloviev, believe that this information is a credible interpolation that Vladislav the Grammarian, who witnessed Stefan's last years, included in the transcript of his hagiography.[1501] Several documents from the period between 1418 and 1426, mentioning Nikola Pataren, indicate the presence of adherents of the Bosnian Church in Srebrenica, as they refer to the selection of judicial commissions to resolve disputes.[1502]

According to a census from the second half of the 14th century, the Bosnian Franciscan Vicariate comprised seven custodies, some of which extended far beyond the borders of Bosnia. Two custodies of the Bosnian Vicariate, Mačva and Bulgaria, territorially encompassed areas that belonged to the Serbian Despotate. The Mačva custody included several significant border towns in northeastern Bosnia, as well as Srebrenica with the Franciscan

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1499 K. Nevostrujev, "Dvije starinske srpske molitve", *Glasnik SUD* III/XX, Beograd 1866, 148.

1500 Jaroslav Šidak, "Problem 'bosanske crkve' u našoj historiografiji od Petranovića do Glušca", *Rad JAZU* 259, Zagreb 1937, 155-157.

1501 Solovjev, "Svedočanstva", 95.

1502 (3. 9. 1418) Cons. Minus II, 10v. (10. 9. 1418) (7. 3. 1419) (21. 7. 1419) (4. 4. 1426) Veselinović, *Malo veće*, 40, 48, 55, 171.

Monastery of St. Mary.[1503] The Franciscans in Srebrenica enjoyed the favor of Ragusan merchants, who bequeathed them significant material resources through their wills. It is noteworthy that the merchants from Srebrenica and Zvonik acted as financiers for Catholic places of worship not only in the Despotate but also in economic centers like Krupanj, Zajača, Crnča, Rudnik, and even Belgrade.[1504] Several decisions of the Ragusan Councils mention the Guardian of the local Franciscans. In October 1425, the Ragusan authorities responded to a letter from the Franciscans and the Guardian of Srebrenica, and in February 1428, there was a dispute involving Guardian Martin from Srebrenica.[1505] The active involvement of the Franciscans in Srebrenica is illustrated by the mentioned information from 1453 when they made a contract with two stonemasons and one stonecutter to build a church and perform other tasks according to the Guardian's wishes.

Several pieces of information about the institutional organization of the Catholic Church in medieval Bosnia in the 1430s and 1440s provide a framework for understanding the religious circumstances in Srebrenica at that time. According to the letter from Pope Eugene IV in April 1434, the new bishop of the *Biduanensis et Visocinensis* bishopric was appointed to be the Franciscan Stjepan Radošević, succeeding the former bishop Petar.[1506] In another letter addressed to the chosen bishop Stjepan Radošević, sent by Pope Eugene IV, the name of the bishopric was changed to *Capirinensis*

[1503] Jelenić, *Kultura i bosanski franjevci*, 37. Mandić, *Franjevačka Bosna*, 232. Andrija Zirdum, "Franjevci u Srebrenici", *BF* 39, Sarajevo 2013, 192.

[1504] There are interesting cases of the Ragusan Dabiživ Latinica from Srebrenica, who bequeathed funds for the completion of works on the church in Čagalj in his will, and his fellow citizen who donated the Church of St. Mary in Belgrade in 1442. Kovačević-Kojić, *Gradski život*, 232.

[1505] (1. 10. 1425) Cons. Minus IV, 143v. (28. 2. 1428) Cons. Rog. III, 263v.

[1506] Dominik Mandić, *Bosna i Hercegovina*, *Povijesno-kritička istraživanja I: Državna i vjerska pripadnost sredovječne Bosne i Hercegovine*, Ziral, Chicago-Rim 1978, 487. For a review of Mandić's theses on the Visoko-Srebrenica bishopric, see: John Fine, "Mysteries about the newly discovered Srebrenica-Visoko bishopric in Bosnia (1434–1441)", *East European Quarterly* VIII/1, Colorado 1974, 29-43. Dženan Dautović, "Bosna i Rimska kurija u srednjem vijeku", Filozofski fakultet, Univerzitet u Sarajevu, 2017, doctoral thesis, 216-217.

et Visocinensis.[1507] The letter also stated that the inhabitants of Deževica, Kreševo, Fojnica, Jajce, and Srebrenica were informed about this change.[1508] It is through this papal statement that the territorial scope of this bishopric was defined, which included the mining region of central Bosnia, as well as Jajce and Srebrenica. Among all the cities mentioned, only Srebrenica was located outside the Bosnian borders at the time. In January 1440, Pope Eugene IV sent a letter to the new bishop of the canonically united bishoprics of *Srebrinensis et Vissocconensis*, Tomo Matić from Trogir, who replaced the deceased bishop Stjepan. The chapters of the mentioned bishoprics, the clergy, the inhabitants of the towns and dioceses, the Archbishop of Ragusa, and Bosnian King Tvrtko II were all informed about the appointment of the new bishop.[1509] According to the Pope's letters, it appears that one of the bishopric seats was relocated to Srebrenica between 1434 and 1440. Taking into account the fact that Srebrenica fell under Ottoman rule a year before its first mention as one of the seats of the Srebrenica-Visoko bishopric, it is highly likely that the upper limit for the relocation of the seat should be considered as 1439 or even an earlier period due to the military activities that year. However, it is justified to doubt whether Srebrenica truly housed one of the bishopric seats or if the name Srebrenica-Visoko indicated the territorial extent of the bishopric.

The information from November 1441, when the priest Jacob de Smina accused the Srebrenica-Visoko Bishop Toma of occupying his chaplaincy in Brštanovo, led to the identification of this Catholic bishop with an Orthodox one. Referring to Jacob's claim that Bishop Toma left him a letter in the Slavic language and script, Daniele Farlati included information in his work suggesting the Orthodox or Raška origin of this Bishop (*de Thoma Episcopo ritus Graeci, five Rasciani*), thus linking it to the possibility that the

[1507] Mandić, *Bosna i Hercegovina,* 487. Luca Wadding, *Annales minorum seu trium ordinum*, Tomus Decimus, Romae 1734, 225, 531.

[1508] Mandić, *Bosna i Hercegovina*, 487. Fine, "Srebrenica-Visoko bishopric in Bosnia", 30.

[1509] Mandić, *Bosna i Hercegovina*, 488. Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti*, 223.

Srebrenica-Visoko bishopric belonged to the Orthodox order.[1510] According to the Book of Obligations of the Roman Church, in which taxes and duties of the bishopric towards the papal see were recorded, it is possible to track the obligations of the Srebrenica-Visoko bishopric through one entry. In the decision from February 1440, it is stated that the bishopric of *Srebrenicen et Vissictoven* in the Province of Ragusa was to pay 33 1/3 florins, which precisely places it among the known Catholic bishoprics of that time.[1511] A document from 1441 provides the chronologically latest information about the Srebrenica-Visoko bishopric, which encompassed parts of Bosnia and the Despotate under its jurisdiction.

[1510] Daniele Farlati, *Illyrici Sacri tomus IV*, Venetis 1769, 408. Mandić, *Bosna i Hercegovina*, 475. About this letter see: Mladen Ančić, "Pet dokumenata za povijest istočnojadranskog zaleđa na početku XV stoljeća", *GAAR BiH* 29/1989, Sarajevo 1989, 166-167.

[1511] Fine, "Srebrenica-Visoko bishopric in Bosnia", 35.

VIII

WALKING ALONG THE MARGINS OF UNDERSTANDING: THE ISSUE OF BORDERS

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The issue of borders between Bosnia and the Despotate in the period between 1402 and 1459 has been approached in various ways in existing historiography.[1512] A limited number of sources, based on documents of different provenance, and the nature of the borders, which were subject to frequent changes, permit only a rough outline of the border line between Bosnia and the Despotate. The inability to locate specific places mentioned in contemporary sources further complicates understanding the ultimate territorial extent of these lands. Due to these challenges, a detailed analysis of the microtoponymy of the border regions between Bosnia and the Despotate, based on currently available sources, remains inconclusive.

In the early 15th century, the Despotate established a border with Bosnia in the northern region when, through Sigismund's concession of Mačva, the authority of Despot Stefan extended to the Drina River.[1513] Therefore, it is justified to emphasize the border in the northern part in the first decades of the 15th century, which ran along the lower course of the Drina River, separating Bosnia and the Despotate in the areas of Usora and Mačva. The presence of King Tvrtko II in the village of Glavičica near Zvonik in April 1432 and in Podzvonik in April 1433, during his conflict with Despot Đurađ, represents the earliest chronological references that allow for the

[1512] Dinić, "Zemlja hercega", 241-243. Veselinović, "Granice između Srbije i Bosne u XV veku ", 87-100. Dušan Spasić, "Srednjovjekovni utvrđeni gradovi srednjeg Polimlja", *MZ* 2, Prijepolje 1996, 35-69. Miloš Luković, "Zajednička granica oblasti Kosača i oblasti Brankovića južno od reke Tare", *Balcanica* XXXV, Beograd 2005, 91-158. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 113-122. Mišić, "Obnova Despotovine", 68-69. Milan Vojnović, "Granice i župe zemlje Drine, *BG* 9, Požarevac 2014, 21-22. Mišić, *Istorijska geografija*, 51-52.

[1513] Veselinović, *Država srpskih despota*, 117.

examination of changes in ownership of these regions.[1514] Although sources from the 1430s do not indicate changes in power in this area, Ragusan records from 1451 mention the purchase of Zvonik by Despot Đurađ and Duke Sandalj.[1515] Considering the fact that Duke Sandalj died in 1435, it remains a possibility that the Ragusan authorities were referring to a period of conflict between the Bosnian king and the Serbian despot. The chronicler Orbini also testifies about Đurađ's attack on Zvonik, but does not mention potential border changes.[1516] One piece of information from July 1441, when Despot Đurađ was in Ragusa, indicates his authority over unknown parts of Usora from an earlier period. This document is a renouncement of previous claims by the despot, including the customs duties in Usora, in favor of Marin Goze.[1517] It is quite certain that during the fall of the Despotate between 1439 and 1444, neither Usora nor any part of it fell under the despot's rule. There is a piece of information from that period that adds more uncertainty as to the authority over this area. In November 1441, in response to a query from Ragusan Franko Radonić, the authorities did not give consent for the purchase of eight pieces of cloth with silver from an unnamed Bosnian from Glavičica and the sending of the cloth to the same person in Glavičica.[1518] A decade earlier, during tense relations with Despot Đurađ, Glavičica was identified as a place in the vicinity of Zvonik. In September 1426 and April 1438, judicial commissions were established in Glavičica regarding a dispute involving the Ragusan, but without further information about this location.[1519] Scant and fragmentary information about Usora in the 1430s and 1440s does not allow for a clearer understanding

[1514] Lett. di Lev. XI, 86v, 144v.

[1515] Lett. di Lev. XIV, 92.

[1516] Orbin, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, 163.

[1517] Spremić, *Despot*, 303.

[1518] The proposal was not adopted: "de faciendo gratiam Francho Radognich quia possit emere petias octo pannorum cum argento unius Bosiniensium de Glauizize in ipso existente et deinde mittere ipsos pannos dicto Bosinensium faciente tamen ipso Francho sacramentum et eo firmante quod ita si et eius veritas" (9. 11. 1441) Cons. Rog. VIII, 64v. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 36.

[1519] (10. 9. 1426) Cons. Minus IV, 33. (19. 4. 1438) Cons. Maius VII, 211.

of ownership in this area. In a similar context, we also observe the chronologically subsequent piece of information from 1446 when a duke was mentioned in Zvonik, which in earlier publications was characterized as a reference of the rule of Despot Đurađ in this place, based on the fact that towns under Bosnian rule were not ruled by a duke.[1520]

The negotiations between King Tomaš and Despot Đurađ in 1452 reactivated the issue of authority over parts of Usora. Ragusan authorities stated in a letter dated November 1452 that the despot had achieved his intention regarding Zvonik.[1521] The interpretation of ownership over Zvonik is further complicated by a brief and imprecise piece of information. However, according to reports, it appears that during this occasion, the despot obtained consent from Tomaš to rule over this place. During negotiations with the Bosnian king, the despot resided in sub-town of Teočak and on the right bank of the Drina River in the village of Radalje near Zvonik.[1522] In October 1453, Despot Đurađ was first titled as *totius Uxore dominius*. However, despite this title, his authority extended to only a small part of this area.[1523] The subsequent data regarding this region dates back to October 1458 when the Teočak county and Usora were mentioned. According to King Tomaš's charter confirming the possessions of logothete Ratković, the Teočak county included the villages of Lukova, Gornji and Srednji Prekopac, two villages named Kunceli, Podlužje, Pelnave, and Donji Tobud, as well as the village of Paklare in Usora, which the logothete received from Lazar's widow Helena after Lazar's death.[1524] As explicitly mentioned in the charter, Ratković held possessions in the Teočak county during the rule of Đurađ and his successor Lazar, indicating the extent of the earlier authority of Serbian despots on the left side of the Drina in the area of Usora. In early

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[1520] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 77. Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, "Zvornik (Zvonik) u srednjem vijeku", *GDI BiH* XVI, Sarajevo 1965, 34. Spremić, "Despot Đurađ Branković i Mačvanska banovina", 95.

[1521] (22. 11. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 113v.

[1522] (22. 11. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XIV, 113-113v. (12. 9. 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 85.

[1523] (8. 10. 1453) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 171.

[1524] Rački, "Prilozi", 156-157.

1458, King Tomaš annexed Srebrenica and 11 unidentified fortresses west of the Drina to the Bosnian state, suggesting that the majority of the territories confirmed to Ratković were already part of the Bosnian state at that time.[1525] All indications suggest that in the case of Teočak, a secure and documented line of ownership over this place can be established, ranging from the time of Despot Đurađ's visit in 1452 to Tomaš's conquests in early 1458.

Clearly, the border between Bosnia and the Despotate in the area of Usora could be determined through the line of possessions witnessed as belonging to the Despot Đurađ, with the river Spreča representing the westernmost extent. This model of border solution between the two states was based on an attempt to locate the fortresses of Brodar, Susjed, and Sokol in the valley of the Spreča River. According to the same interpretations, by capturing Zvonik and Teočak in 1433, Despot Đurađ controlled a much larger territory than the areas along the Drina, due to the fact that these two towns were the most important transportation hubs for the entire eastern and northeastern Bosnia, including the inclusion of Bijeljina in the possession of the Despotate.[1526] By comparing these conclusions with the presented analysis of sources about Usora in the 15th century, it is evident that they only reflect certain periods from the first half of the 15th century. The authority of Despot Đurađ in the Usora area can only be discussed from 1433, definitively excluding the period of Ottoman occupation of the Despotate from 1439 to 1444. These areas were apparently the scene of conflicts between the Hungarians and the Ottomans during this period. In King Władysław's charter from April 1443, it is mentioned that Hungarian forces led by Hunyadi and Nicholas de Ilok made a breakthrough into Usora and Raška.[1527] Historiography has linked this breakthrough to the title of the Teočak count, which was later held by Nicholas de Ilok.[1528] The source from 1441 also contains an interesting ref-

[1525] (22. 2. 1458) Macuscev, *Monumenta historica* II, 204-205. Nagy-Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziai*, 6.

[1526] Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 121-122. Mrgić, "Pismo kneza Dragiše", 206-207. Slightly modified views were also presented in: Mišić, "Obnova Despotovine", 68-69. Mišić, *Istorijska geografija*, 51-52.

[1527] (17. 4. 1443) Thallóczy-Aldasy, *Magyarország*, 142.

[1528] Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 123-124.

erence to a resident who was identified as a Bosnian, and who was recorded in Glavičica near Zvonik. After the establishment of the Despotate, specific data on Despot Đurađ's authority over Zvonik was recorded in 1452 and confirmed through Tomaš's charter in 1458. If we were to consider Đurađ's stay in Teočak in 1452 as evidence of his authority over this place, then that would be the earliest reliable and authentic indication of Teočak as part of the Despotate. Through Tomaš's charter to logothete Ratković, it is clearly expressed that Đurađ and Lazar ruled Teočak, within which the Teočak county was established. However, both of these sources are from the 1450s. Recent research confirms Despot's ownership of Bijeljina through a charter issued by the Buda Chapter in September 1442, in which Despot Đurađ transferred certain possessions to his relative Paul Birini. The authenticity of this charter is questionable.[1529] Bijeljina is mentioned in the chronicles of Aşıkpaşazade and Neşri as a place plundered by the Ottoman army.[1530] According to a complaint filed by Ragusan merchants in March 1446, damage was inflicted upon them by the subjects of the Mačva Ban in Bijeljina.[1531] Based on the presented data on the border issues between Bosnia and the Despotate in the lower course of the Drina, the conclusion can be drawn that the preserved sources allow for the formation of a picture of the authority of Serbian despots over Zvonik as early as 1433, with the exception of the period of Ottoman occupation of the Despotate, the authority over Bijeljina, and Teočak through the prism of the dubious authenticity of Đurađ's charter from 1442, and the probable authority over Teočak from 1433, certainly attested to in the 1450s.

[1529] Aleksandar Krstić-Neven Isailović-Aleksandar Jakovljević, "B(i)jeljin(a)-zemlja, kneštvo, arhiđakonat, distrikt, nahija", *IČ* LXVII, Beograd 2018, 30. About this charter see: Aleksandar Krstić-Neven Isailović, "Donacija despota Đurđa Vukovića (Brankovića) Pavlu Biriniju iz Verone: Problem autentičnosti", *Inicijal* 4, Beograd 2016, 195-226.

[1530] Krstić-Isailović-Jakovljević, "B(i)jeljin(a)-zemlja, kneštvo, arhiđakonat, distrikt, nahija", 31-32.

[1531] "Bogisa Bogmilouich coram domino Alouisio Rectore Ragusi fecit lamentum supra Vuchich Pribiseuich et Vuchich Ugrinouich et Radiç Gucich et alios homines de Osuart bano de Illoç dicens quod ipsi depradarunt eum in Bielina et aceperunt sibi in mercibus, ducatis, argento et pannis ducatorum CCCCXXXV et duos equos et arma et vestimenta sua et unam taciam argenti." (3. 6. 1446) Lam. de for. XX, 71. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 121. Krstić-Isailović-Jakovljević, "B(i)jeljin(a)-zemlja, kneštvo, arhiđakonat, distrikt, nahija", 33.

In the first decade of the 15th century, the middle course of the Drina River served as the border between Bosnia and the Despotate in the region of Podrinje. Certain changes in Podrinje occurred with Hrvoje's concession of Srebrenica and neighboring towns to King Sigismund in the mid-1410s when a temporary Hungarian zone was created between the territories under the influence of the Bosnian crown and Despot Stefan. On that occasion, according to reports from Ragusan merchants, the towns of Srebrenik, Kučlat, Brodar, Susjed, and Srebrenica came under Hungarian rule.[1532] Documents from May 1413 indicate Despot Stefan's ownership of Srebrenica, which also marks the first mention of possessions governed by Serbian despots west of the Drina.[1533] Through the Ragusan announcement to King Sigismund in August 1415, which explicitly stated that the Hungarian ruler had handed over Srebrenica to Stefan, the puzzle regarding Stefan's ownership of Srebrenica is resolved.[1534]

The issue of the fortresses that Hrvoje handed over to Sigismund in 1410 becomes apparent through the inheritance agreement between Despot Stefan and Sigismund, drawn up in Tata in May 1426. Hrvoje's earlier fortresses, Brodar and Susjed, were mentioned in the area of Poljanica near the town of Sokol. Among other possessions in the vicinity, the Hungarian king sought to acquire possessions that had previously belonged to certain Dragiša and Hlap, who had since passed away without heirs, as well as the fortress of Tišnica in the Osat region.[1535] According to the presented data, it would imply that Sigismund granted these possessions to Despot Stefan. It is unknown when these possessions were transferred to the Despotate, and it is possible that they changed hands around the same time as Srebrenica, between 1411 and

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[1532] (30. 5. 1410) Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, 195.

[1533] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 57.

[1534] (18. 8. 1415) Gelcich-Thálloczy, *Diplomatarium*, 250-251.

[1535] "iam dictum regnum Rasciae omniaque et singula iura et iurisdictiones eiusdem, demtis, exemptis et penitus exclusis castro Thysnicza et pertinentis eiusdem in tenutis Ozaz habitis; item castro Zahol in contrata Polanch habito, in qua scilicet contrata quondam Dominus Hervoya, castra Brodar et Zomzed fecit aedificare; item teris et tenutis quondam Dragisa et Halap penes praedictum castrum Zokol habitis per defectum seminis eorumdem ad maiestatem nostram regiam devolutis" (1426) Fejer, *Codex diplomaticvs* X/6, 811.

1413. One of the proposed theories, based on the conflict between King Tvrtko II and Despot Stefan in 1425, when an unsuccessful attack on Srebrenica took place, suggests a potential expansion of the Despotate west of the Drina, explaining that these possessions likely correspond to those mentioned in the treaty from Tata.[1536] This possibility is contradicted by the concept of the treaty, in which Sigismund sought the return of possessions he had previously granted to Despot Stefan, including Mačva, Belgrade, and Golubac, all of which were unquestionably known to be part of the Despotate via a deed of donation from the Hungarians in the early 15th century. If Brodar, Susjed, and Tišnica were indeed places that Despot Stefan conquered from King Tvrtko II through military engagement, it would mean that the Bosnian ruler, after Hrvoje's concession of these territories to the Hungarian crown in 1410, regained control over those regions. However, such a scenario would neutralize Sigismund's rights to reclaim these places. Accordingly, it is reasonable to interpret that the towns and possessions west of the Drina mentioned in this agreement could not have been annexed to the Despotate by military force. Interestingly, this document does not mention the fate of Kučlat, which Hrvoje ceded to the Hungarians in 1410 along with other possessions, so it is uncertain whether this fortress was included in the Despotate during the 15th century. The sub-town of Kučlat was mentioned earlier in November 1396 as a place through which one passed from Bosnia into the territory under the rule of the Lazarević family.[1537]

The fate of the territories that entered the possession of the Despotate through donations from King Sigismund after 1426 is unknown, and therefore it cannot be reliably stated that the Serbian despots held Susjed and Brodar even after that year. The exception is Srebrenica, which was not included in the territories that were supposed to revert to the possession of the Hungarian crown with the change of power in the Despotate in 1427. The demarcation of borders between Bosnia and the Despotate in this area in the

[1536] Ćirković, *Istorija*, 257. Veselinović, "Granice između Srbije i Bosne", 92. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 113. Mišić, *Istorijska geografija*, 50.

[1537] Stojanović, *Povelje i pisma* I/1, 182. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 35.

late 1420s was greatly hindered by the inability to locate Brodar and Susjed. Earlier analyses linked the fortress of Tišnica to the Tiša county mentioned in the charter of King Tomaš to the logothete Ratković, composed in October 1458.[1538] The name Tišnica could be associated with the Tiša county, but in the treaty from Tata, Tišnica is situated in the Osat region.[1539] Whether an administrative unit of Tiša county was established in Osat near the fortress of Tišnica remains an open question due to lack of sources. According to the charter of Despot Đurađ to the grand *čelnik* Radič from 1428/1429, a village named Tišica was also located in Mačva.[1540] Poljana or Poljanica has been identified as a place near Tuzla with the present names of Gornja and Donja Poljana, or Poljice in the nahiya of Donja Tuzla, recorded during censuses in 1519 and 1533.[1541] The proposed framework is a comparison with Ottoman censuses that were created a century after the treaty in Tata, where the mentioned place was sought in a broader vicinity. The frequency of toponyms with the basis Poljice in the Bosnian territory and the fact that Herzog Hrvoje did not hold the territory of the later nahiya of Donja Tuzla pose obstacles to the viability of this location.

The demarcation of the border line between Bosnia and the Despotate in the vicinity of Srebrenica was further complicated by frequent changes of ownership over this place from 1439 until 1458. During the 15th century, documents sporadically mention several smaller places in the vicinity of Srebrenica, such as Čagalj and its sub-town, the villages of Gasan, Grabovica, Prapratno, as well as settlements with Latinized names like Boratove, Jelasse, Jeligne, Pleoponiza, Poredusse, Cherenza, and Buzan.[1542] It is unknown whether these neighboring places changed their supreme ruler

[1538] Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 116. Mišić, "Obnova Despotovine", 68. Blagojević, "Krajišta srednjovekovne Srbije", 41.

[1539] Aleksandar Hoffer, "Položaj nekih mjesta u povelji kralja Sigismunda od god. 1426.", *GZM* V, Sarajevo 1893, 553.

[1540] Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, 335. Gavro Škrivanić, "Vlastelinstvo velikog čelnika Radiča Postupovića", *IČ* XX, Beograd 1973, 133.

[1541] Thálloczy, "Prilozi", 187. Handžić, *Tuzla i njena okolina,* 292-293. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 117.

[1542] Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 34. Kovačević-Kojić, *Gradska naselja*, 183.

due to the frequent conquests of Srebrenica by Bosnian kings and Serbian despots. Based on a few pieces of information, it is possible to bring the rulers and nobles from Bosnia and the Despotate on the same level with smaller places around Srebrenica. During his meeting with King Tomaš, Despot Đurađ resided in the village of Sasi near Srebrenica in November 1452.[1543] According to the records of the Ragusan chancellery, the settlement named Sasi was mentioned as part of the Despotate in May 1436.[1544] Sasi is mentioned in connection with the appointment of Ragusan judicial commissions in this place during 1449 and 1450.[1545] On the other hand, the subjects of the nobility Dinjičić were accused in November 1418 of plundering Ragusan merchants in the village of Miloševići near Srebrenica.[1546] Interestingly, Srebrenica was certainly under the control of Despot Stefan at this time. The period of temporary fall of the Despotate, when Ottoman rule was established in Srebrenica, represents a specific chronological framework in which the fate of the surrounding settlements is unknown. The only certainty is that they could not have been integral parts of the Despotate, which did not exist at that time. The situation from the end of 1443 and the beginning of 1444 should also be viewed in the same context when the Dinjičić family ambiguously governed Srebrenica, which was nominally owned by Despot Đurađ. Even greater problems for establishing borders arise from the frequent changes in ownership of Srebrenica from 1444, as well as the division of customs in this place between Tomaš and Đurađ witnessed during 1447 and 1448. The continuous changes in ownership of Srebrenica and the attacks on this area by King Tomaš and the Bosnian nobility during the 1440s and 1450s represent an additional burden in forming a clearer picture of the delimitation of possessions in this area. The campaign

[1543] (October 1452) Lett. di Lev. XV, 10.

[1544] (31. 5. 1436) Kurtović, *Arhivska građa za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne*, 1055.

[1545] (22. 4. 1449) (3. 11. 1449) (3. 1. 1450) (4. 2. 1450) Cons. Minus XII, 73, 119v, 135, 140v.

[1546] (21. 8. 1419) Lam. de for. IV, 57v. Kurtović, *Ispisi građe za historiju srednjovjekovne Bosne (Lamenta de foris)*, 27. Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva* I, 43. Dinić-Knežević, *Tkanine*, 265-266. Kovačević-Kojić, *Srebrenica*, 47.

of King Tomaš in early 1458, when he annexed Srebrenica and eleven other fortresses to his state, does not contribute to a concrete resolution of the border issue. Furthermore, since the possessions acquired by the Bosnian king during this occasion were not named in the report of the Venetian subjects from Split, it is not possible to determine their exact location.

The border between Bosnia and the Despotate in Podrinje during the 15th century, according to earlier interpretations, was defined in such a way that the Despotate was attributed territories encompassing a large bend of the Drina River north of Višegrad to the mouth of the Drinjača River, where the Jadar, Drinjača rivers and the Devetak and Javor mountains were represented as borders.[1547] Considering the presented data on Srebrenica and the surrounding areas, it is justified to argue that this border arrangement in Podrinje cannot be considered a satisfactory solution due to the inability to locate specific towns and the exceptional instability of this border, for which only a small number of precise sources have been preserved. The Drina River formed the border between Bosnia and the Despotate south of Srebrenica. Višegrad, located on the left bank of the Drina, was part of Bosnia, with a brief exception when, according to Ragusan diplomatic reports, Despot Đurađ was in control of the town, at the latest in February 1449.[1548] The sources do not follow the further role of the Serbian despots in Višegrad, where Đurađ's influence appears to have been of short duration.

Interpretations of authority over the territory to the left of the Drina River, north of Višegrad, in earlier researches, projected an image of a unified territory on the left bank of the Drina under the jurisdiction of Serbian despots, and a compact uninterrupted territory that began slightly upstream from Višegrad and extended all the way to the Sava River.[1549] The entire border in this area was represented as beginning at the confluence of the Lukavac

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[1547] Veselinović, "Granica između Srbije i Bosne", 91. Veselinović, *Država srpskih despota*, 118-119. Mišić, "Obnova Despotovine", 69. Mišić, *Istorijska geografija*, 49.

[1548] (27. 2. 1449) (11. 3. 1449) Cons. Rog. XI, 45v, 53. Lett. di Lev. XIV, 10.

[1549] Veselinović, "Granica između Srbije i Bosne", 99. Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 121-122. Mrgić, "Pismo kneza Dragiše", 206.

River with the Sava River in the southwest, following the course of the river southward towards the slopes of Majevica, leaving Gornja Tuzla in the hands of the Despotate. Further south, the valley of the Spreča River belonged to Bosnia, while the middle and lower course of the Drinjača River belonged to the Despotate. Following this, the border continued southeast, incorporating Srebrenica and its region on the Serbian side, before descending down the Žepa Valley, where the left bank, including Višegrad, belonged to the Despotate.[1550] According to the presented primary sources, however, such borders cannot be drawn. It is clear from the sources presented that the Despotate did not control a unified, uninterrupted territory west of the Drina River in the 15th century. When viewed in the context of the entire time period of the Despotate's existence, the authority of Serbian despots over the Bijeljina area is particularly problematic, as the activities of these rulers are not documented in the Lukavac River valley and the Tuzla region. Đurađ's influence in Višegrad was recorded only once in the last decade of the Despotate's existence. The specific rule of Serbian despots in the areas of Srebrenica, Zvonik, and Teočak can only be traced in the presented separate chronological frameworks, but it should be noted that the border between Bosnia and the Despotate in Podrinje and Usora, after the 1430s, represented a flexible wartime line subject to frequent changes.

South of Višegrad, the border between Bosnia and the Despotate extended southeast from the mouth of the Lim River, following the valley of this river and including the possessions mentioned in three charters issued for Stjepan Vukčić in 1444, 1448, and 1454. It is important to note that the discussion regarding the border between Bosnia and the Despotate in these regions can only be traced back to 1427 when Đurađ Branković merged the territory ruled by Despot Stefan with his family possessions upon assuming power in the Despotate. The inability to locate certain places mentioned in the charters and the scarcity of sources make it challenging to track the border more precisely in these areas. Even with these difficulties, Mihailo Dinić's

[1550] Mišić, *Istorijska geografija*, 52. A slightly modified description of the border is also presented in: Mrgić, *Severna Bosna*, 121-122.

framework for the establishment of borders in these regions provides a solid basis for determining the extent of the territories that were part of Bosnia and the Despotate. According to Dinić's research in the 1440s and 1450s, several secure peripheral points existed in the Lim River valley that were part of the Bosnian Kingdom, including Severin near Rudo, Kovin on the bank of the Lim between Priboj and Prijepolje, and Mileševac. The border crossed the Lim River south of Prijepolje, with Komarani falling under the Despotate's authority. From Komarani, all possessions to the left of the Lim River, including the Mileševka river valley with the county of Crna Stijena, belonged to the Bosnian state, while further south, the border passed between Breza and Komarani, with Maoče being included in the possessions under the authority of the Kosača family. The border then moved towards the Tara River, the mountain range that forms the watershed between the Lim and Ćehotina rivers. Brskovo belonged to the Despotate, while the village of Kričani belonged to Bosnia. In the southern regions, the border was formed by the Morača River, Nikšić county, Budoš, and Dračevica with Novi and Risno, while the eastern possessions of the fortresses Medun and Soko were temporarily falling within the Bosnian borders. Along this stretch, in broader terms, the border was formed by the Sinjajevina mountain range, the watershed between the upper courses of the Tara and Morača rivers, the Prekornica mountain, Ostrog, Budoš, and Risan mountains.[1551] The analysis of currently available sources on the demarcation of possessions belonging to Bosnia and the Despotate in the Polimlje region, the Tara River valley, and the southern regions towards the sea, does not significantly deviate from the presented views.

[1551] Dinić, "Oblast Brankovića", 10-11. Dinić, "Zemlje hercega", 241-243. The demarcation framework set in this way represented the main basis for the interpretation of the borders between Bosnia and the Despotate in these areas in several subsequent publications. Ruža Ćuk, "Breza i Komarani-srednjovekovna naselja u Polimlju", *IČ* XXXIV, Beograd 1987, 61. Veselinović, *Država srpskih despota*, 139, 141. Spasić, "Srednjovjekovni utvrđeni gradovi", 67. Spremić, *Despot*, 124. Luković, "Zajednička granica", 141. Mišić, "Obnova Despotovine", 69. Vojnović, "Granice i župe", 22. Mišić, *Istorijska geografija*, 52.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Factography and the character of relations

In the period between 1402 and 1459, the mutual relations between Bosnia and the Despotate were largely characterized by the established principles of neighborly relations associated with the late feudal period. Bosnia and the Despotate were not related by the medieval phenomenon of vassalship and suzerainty, so their mutual relations flowed along the middle line of intensity with constantly open foci that led to deeper interactions. As a result of their own ambitions, sporadic permeation also occurred in areas where, because of crises, the interests of the two neighbors coincided. Mutual relations between Bosnia and the Despotate often included a wide range of neighboring states, thus creating significant moments that left an outline on the everyday life of the wider area of Southeast Europe. Due to the specific geographical location of Bosnia and the Despotate, both Eastern and Western powers exerted strong influences on these states. Powerful forces often created the circumstances in which Bosnian and the Despotate's political actions intersected. The quality of the foreign policy position of Bosnia and the Despotate was a nuance that significantly contributed to shifting the focus of the mutual power ratio.

In the first decades of the 15th century, the uneven foreign policy of the Hungarian Kingdom towards its southern neighbors created a foundation for the further encroachment of neighboring influences. In this period, the seeds of discord were sown through the foreign policy of King Sigismund, which greatly influenced the relations between Bosnia and the Despotate. With the Hungarian ceding of the rich ore-bearing area of Srebrenica to Despot Stefan Lazarević, a new model of power over this place was established, which was never accepted by the Bosnian nobles. As part of his foreign policy

actions directed at the Hungarians, Despot Stefan provided a quality starting point in relation to the Bosnian state. By joining the ranks of Hungarian vassals, Stefan gained the benefit from a strong suzerain who in the first decades of the 15th century waged a series of wars against the Bosnian Kingdom, in which the Serbian despot also sporadically participated. The result was the creation of a characteristic basis, which in this period prevented the development of deeper relations between Bosnia and the Despotate. The opening of the war in Zeta and the Ottoman interregnum led to sporadic and fragmentary reversals of influence during this period. However, these were short-lived episodes that did not have a significant impact on state relations.

The defeat of the Hungarian army in Lašva in 1415 also weakened Sigismund's influence in Bosnia, which was seeking to stabilize domestic policy following a decade of Hungarian attacks which had a significant impact on Bosnian foreign policy engagement. Furthermore, the change in regional political circumstances conditioned a weaker Hungarian engagement in favor of Despot Stefan. The Bosnian king Tvrtko II, by consolidating positions in the border areas of the Bosnian state together with the nobles, decided to attack Srebrenica in 1425, thus demonstrating the quality of neighborly relations at the time. Shortly after the weakening of Hungarian influence, Bosnia and the Despotate found themselves within the reach of the intensified expansionist policy of the Ottoman Empire in the 1420s, following a shift in the focus of power. By refusing to join the ranks of the obedient, the Bosnian king moved on the margins of dependence on the Ottoman sultan. Due to this commitment, the Bosnian state has once again been unable to establish a stable foothold, which has adversely affected its relations with its neighbors. On the other hand, Despot Đurađ Branković joined the ranks of permanent Ottoman vassals in the late 1420s, thus temporarily creating a position that affected later relations with the western neighbor.

By excluding significant Hungarian influence in shaping the political framework in Southeast Europe, the predominance in direct conflicts in this area belonged to the side that firmly adhered to the Ottoman course.

Due to ties at the Ottoman court, Despot Đurađ was included in the list of participants in the Konavle war by the Republic of Ragusa, but his role in the Bosnian-Ragusan conflict in the early 1430s remained on the surface of diplomatic activities without significant impact on the outcome of the war. Skillfully keeping his distance from unnecessary contact with the Ottomans, King Tvrtko II used the power of his own resources to solve the potential loss of part of the Bosnian crown's possessions. Immediately after these events, the Bosnian king found himself in the same role during the conflict with Despot Đurađ, when the despot's role in earlier events was the reason for their confrontation. Using the position of the Bosnian state as the main economic artery of the Despotate with Ragusa, the Bosnian king established the economic isolation of Đurađ's territories. The context of broader political relations came to the fore again in this case, when the Bosnian king was forced to reduce his activities towards despot Đurađ in line with the Ottoman attacks on Bosnia. The stay of Tvrtko II and Đurađ in Buda in the following years was used by King Sigismund to mediate between the conflicting parties due to the fact that the stability of mutual relations between Bosnia and the Despotate dictated the predisposition to strengthen Ottoman influence in Southeast Europe.

Adhering to Sultan Murad II did not provide Despot Đurađ with immunity from the Ottoman plans. It was a concept of foreign policy that gave the Despotate an advantage in conflicts with neighboring states, but at the same time it created an ostensible image of protection from the Ottoman ambitions. During a strong Ottoman attack in 1439, the Despotate temporarily fell under Ottoman rule, which opened the space for Bosnian nobles to expand Bosnian territory at the expense of the despot's possessions. In these activities, Duke Stjepan Vukčić, who was engaged in the Zeta area, was the strongest. When the Bosnian duke occupied the territory of Upper Zeta, he penetrated all the way to the coastal areas, where he met with strong Venetian influence that sought to exploit new political opportunities. In addition to this context, Duke Stjepan posed the greatest threat to Despot Đurađ

during his exile, along with the Ottomans, and he was forced to leave the Republic of Ragusa, where he stayed for a short time, for fear of Kosača's plans. After the dismissal on the Bosnian throne, King Tomaš revived Bosnia's ambitions to occupy Srebrenica, which he annexed to the Bosnian state, in a changed political framework. With the restoration of the Despotate under the Hungarian patronage, the relations between Bosnia and the Despotate in the 1440s took on new contours with several points of contact, among which the issue of Srebrenica stood out in particular. Following several military conflicts around Srebrenica, the established framework for the division of customs and the simultaneous stay of officials from Bosnia and the Despotate proved to be an ineffective approach to resolving the issue. Upon the return of the land, Đurađ firmly followed the Ottoman path, and he used his contacts at the Ottoman Porte to his advantage in his conflicts with the Bosnian king. Along with these events, Duke Stjepan developed relations with Despot Đurađ that were of extremely variable quality. At the end of the 1440s, a specific constellation of relations was established between Bosnia and the Despotate, which included King Tomaš, Herzog Stjepan and Despot Đurađ. However, the period of concluding short-term alliances did not leave significant traces in the sphere of larger state relations.

The conflict between Herzog Stjepan and the Republic of Ragusa in the early 1450s in the mutual relations between Bosnia and the Despotate was a repetition of the events that took place two decades ago when Duke Radoslav Pavlović clashed with the Ragusans. The Ragusan ambitions to annex Herzog Stjepan's possessions dictated action leading to the Ottoman court. In these efforts, from the beginning of the conflict, Despot Đurađ took over the role of Ragusan mediator at the Ottoman Porte. With the further development of events, the role of the Despot was extended to one of the participants in the alliance, whose members, according to Ragusan ideas, were to buy the Kosača possession. Đurađ's active diplomatic engagement at the Ottoman Porte on behalf of the Ragusans indicates the proportions of the Serbian despot's interest in the issues that arose. At the same time, an agreement was

reached between Tomaš and Đurađ regarding the improvement of the position of the Bosnian king at the Ottoman Porte, for which the despot took over the ownership of Srebrenica as compensation. In this case, the context of political currents of a regional character surfaced once again, in which Đurađ's status as a regular Ottoman vassal was a quality trump card in the Despotate's relations with Bosnia. The scope of the participants' ambitions was thwarted by the further actions of King Tomaš, who did not allow any type of purchase of territories under the jurisdiction of the Bosnian crown.

With the strengthening of Ottoman influence in southeastern Europe in the 1450s, relations between Bosnia and the Despotate took on a new dimension. In accordance with plans drawn up on the European courts, the two neighboring states were to serve as a barrier to Ottoman attacks on Central Europe. Despite European ambitions, after the death of Đurađ Branković, a specific foreign policy, which maintained the state's independence, came to an end in the Despotate. Following the brief reign of Despot Lazar in 1458, space was created in the Despotate to accommodate the more important activities of King Tomaš. The Bosnian king saw the opportunity to expand his authority over the remaining parts of the Despotate after occupying the possessions of the Serbian despots west of Drina in earlier years. The Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus also played a significant role in realizing Tomaš's ambitions. The necessary legitimacy was found in the marriage of Tomaš's son Stjepan to Lazar's daughter Jelena. At the end of the history of relations between Bosnia and the Despotate, a kind of climax was reached with the proclamation of the Bosnian prince Stjepan Tomašević as despot. The political framework of the wider region was not suitable for the long-term maintenance of the power of Despot Stjepan, who did not have a more serious basis for the fight against the Ottomans. Stjepan's position in Smederevo was also difficult due to the presence of the Ottomans in Bosnia, where King Tomaš was not in a position to provide significant assistance to the young despot. Having been unable to remain in the Despotate, which was almost completely conquered by the Ottomans, Despot Stjepan decided to return to Bosnia in June 1459,

thus influencing the final event in the history of mutual relations between the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate.

Aside from political activity, Bosnia and the Despotate's geographical location conditioned intensive relations between them through the prism of economic activity. Due to their affiliation to a single economic sphere, both states developed similar business practices, which were reflected in the formation of businesses aiming to operate in Bosnia and the Despotate. The position of the Bosnian state, which intersected the connections between the Despotate and the most important economic center of Ragusa, conditioned the scope of economic flows that were proportional to the current situation in Bosnia during the 15th century. The wars of the Bosnian state with the Hungarians, Ottomans and Ragusans, as well as changes in the established practice of business by inertia, hindered the economic exchange of the Despotate, and often led to the complete cessation of trade and business in general. The importance of the geographical position of the Bosnian state is best shown by the example from the 1430s, during the war between King Tvrtko II and Despot Đurađ, when the Bosnian king tried to aggravate the position of his opponent by blocking trade.

The specific character of the religious image of Bosnia and the Despotate, in which various church organizations were present, conditioned the question of their influence. Observed historical sources do not indicate that the centers of Serbian Orthodox Church institutional organization existed on the territory of the Bosnian state in the observed chronological framework, which is a matter for future research and consideration. In a similar manner, the Bosnian Church's activities did not significantly extend into the territory of the Despotate. Despite the lack of an institutional background, the preserved examples indicate the presence of adherents of the mentioned churches in both states. The case of Srebrenica as a border town is characteristic, where during the 15th century the construction of religious buildings and the presence of members of the Catholic faith, as well as the presence of members of the Orthodox faith and adherents of the Bosnian Church were witnessed.

The issue of the common border between Bosnia and the Despotate is one of the more complex thematic issues. This part of the Bosnian border was most susceptible to displacement during the first half of the 15th century. As a result, each description of a border line in these areas can only shed light on a short period of time. Through this study, more light is shed on the time periods during which the border has undergone significant changes, relying on archival sources as the sole source of information. In historiography, the thesis that the Serbian despots ruled a complete and unbroken region west of Drina has been shown to be untenable. The points where displacement of the border line occurred the most were detected in the vicinity of Srebrenica, Zvonik, and Višegrad.

Since the coronation of Tvrtko I Kotromanić in 1377, who was titled **крал Срьблкмь и Боснѣ и Поморию и Западнимь странамь**, all subsequent Bosnian kings also contained the element **Срьблкмь** in their title. As a result of scarce sources and an insufficiently understood concept of Tvrtko's state immediately following the taking over of the Serbian crown, opposing theories continue to surface and political spirits are agitated on a daily basis. According to King Tvrtko I's projections, he had intended to expand his rule or have his supremacy acknowledged by the Serbian nobles who emerged after the collapse of the Empire in the 1370s. However, later events and processes demonstrate that this concept was not maintained. In the following century, the kingdom remained exclusively tied to the territory of the Bosnian state and the Bosnian institutional framework. Based on the perspective and time-frame defined by this topic, it is quite clear that the title of the Bosnian kings had no effect on the nature of relations between Bosnia and the Despotate. According to preserved sources, the relationships between rulers and noblemen of these states were rather rare and superficial at the beginning of the 15th century. As a consequence, it may be concluded that these political actors in the first decades of the 15th century merely determined the character of the relationship, which remained devoid of any mutual suzerainty or vassalage in the following decades. There is no mention

or any indication of the influence of Bosnian rulers on the territory of the Despotate until 1459. It is the wider web of events surrounding the takeover of the Despotate by King Tomaš that shows the aforementioned character of relations between these states. Regardless of the fact that at that time the title of the Bosnian king contained the mentioned element **Срьблѣмь**, the Bosnian heir to the throne had to legitimize the political agreement on taking over the despotic title by marrying the daughter of the late Despot Lazar Branković. It was during this period that King Tomaš made a clear distinction between the state forms of Bosnia and the Despotate when he defined them as **кралевьство босанськo и срьбскo госпоцтво**.

The lost archive: An interrupted line in understanding mutual relations

Direct mutual communication between political actors from the Bosnian Kingdom and the Serbian Despotate, from today's perspective, is based on a transcript of one diplomatic document dated October 1458. It concerns a charter issued by King Tomaš to Logothete Stefan Ratković, guaranteeing him rights and possessions. This charter was composed during the negotiations for the marriage of Bosnian Prince Stjepan Tomašević and Jelena (Mara), the daughter of Despot Lazar Branković. There is no information regarding the fate of this document. According to the latest information, this transcript was located in the National Museum of Budapest. However, despite the low number of preserved diplomatic correspondence between Bosnian and Serbian rulers and nobles, information from documents of neighboring states can partially shed light on the question of their mutual communication.

It is reasonable to conclude that, as neighboring states sharing a large border, there were frequent interactions between citizens and feudal lords during the 15th century. Bosnian and Serbian rulers and nobility engaged in warfare, reconciliation, and were part of the same or opposing broader coalitions. They negotiated, made various agreements, and had other contacts, as was customary during the medieval era. For these purposes, a significant number of envoys were sent on diplomatic missions in both directions, usually accompanied by different instructions, letters, and charters of various natures and purposes. In addition to direct communication, of which only the transcript of one document has survived to this day, Bosnian and Serbian magnates frequently communicated through the Ragusan authorities and their extensive network of envoys. Indirect knowledge that arrived in Ragusa through Bosnian, Serbian, and Ragusan envoys can also

provide information indicating direct diplomatic contacts and communication. Without intending to extensively explore the reasons and outcomes of these contacts and correspondences on this occasion, a few examples reveal elements of a permanently lost archive.

Ragusans had knowledge of a diplomatic encounter between Duke Sandalj and Despot Stefan in March 1405. According to the knowledge of the Ragusan authorities, an envoy of the Serbian despot visited the Bosnian nobleman, and they instructed their envoy to gather details about this visit. Given the fact that their influences intersected in the matter of Zeta, it was assumed that the negotiations revolved around those issues. Ragusan envoys attending knightly festivities in Buda in 1412 were instructed not to discuss the agreement between Sandalj and Stefan with them, indicating a strong diplomatic relationship between the two magnates. On the basis of subsequent events, it is possible that an agreement could have been reached regarding a joint action against the Ottoman prince Musa. The synchronized action of Duke Sandalj and the Serbian Despot against the Venetians within the context of the Zeta issue can be traced back to the early 1420s, when Venetian authorities clearly stated that the Bosnian nobleman supported Stefan's positions. In addition to these claims, the Venetian authorities attempted to mediate with the Serbian ruler through Duke Sandalj, demonstrating mutual communication between them. A sort of culmination of these events was projected through Sandalj's stance towards the Venetians, in which he refused to deny assistance to Despot Stefan. To ensure a better position for their subjects in the Despotate, the Ragusans attempted to leverage the good relations between Sandalj and Stefan during 1427. Duke Sandalj also maintained diplomatic relations with Despot Đurađ in a similar environment. During the Konavle War in March 1431, the Ragusan authorities had information that the Serbian Despot was either already present at Sandalj's court or expected to arrive soon.

The neighboring nature of the possessions of the Pavlović nobility and the Serbian despots also left an impact on their mutual communication.

In a letter from a Ragusan envoy in July 1423, it was emphasized that the arrival of Despot Stefan was expected in Borač. The relationship between these neighbors also extended to economic aspects, as evident from the correspondence between Duke Radoslav and the Ragusan authorities in July 1424. Relations with Stefan's successor, Đurađ, were not always favorable for the Pavlović family. During the Konavle War, Despot Đurađ informed the Ragusan authorities that, by order of the Hungarian king, he had sent a letter to Duke Radoslav criticizing him for his attack on Ragusan possessions. Shortly thereafter, Pavlović sent his envoys to the Despotate in order to negotiate Đurađ's mediating role in his planned reconciliation with the Ragusan authorities. However, their mutual communication during this period did not lead to an improvement in their relationship. The subsequent generation of the Pavlović family continued to communicate with the Serbian Despot, although such communication could only be sporadically traced. In January 1444, during the efforts to reclaim land and the Serbian despot's fight against the Ottomans, Duke Ivaniš Pavlović sent a letter through Ragusa to Despot Đurađ with unknown content. It is logical to assume that the intention in this case was to seek involvement in the war led by King Władysław and the Serbian despot.

The good relations initiated between Sandalj and Despot Stefan were not continued by their successors, Duke Stjepan and Despot Đurađ. After a strong military offensive during the temporary fall of the Despotate, the Bosnian nobleman conquered certain possessions belonging to Đurađ. However, with the reestablishment of Đurađ's state and his good relations with the Ottoman Sultan, Stjepan was compelled to improve the relationship. For this purpose, in October 1444, he prepared for a visit to the Despotate. Correspondence between these courts was certainly established, considering that a few months later, their reconciliation was announced. Stjepan's mission sent to the same address in October 1447 served a similar purpose. This engagement with Despot Đurađ was a direct consequence of Duke Stjepan's failure with the Ottoman Sultan and aimed to improve his

own position through the Smederevo court. References from the Ragusan authorities in the following year attest to the continuity of correspondence between the two courts, as they highlighted how Duke Stjepan requested a copy of his older agreement with the despot, and the Ragusans also sent a request to the despot in 1449, asking Đurađ to ensure better treatment for their merchants.

There was a crisis of greater proportions during the conflict between Herzog Stjepan and the Republic of Ragusa, causing several neighboring political factors to become involved in the conflict. As events unfolded, a rift occurred within the Kosača family, where his son Vladislav joined the coalition led by the Ragusans. The ambition to acquire his father's possessions led them through Despot Đurađ to the Ottoman court. In February 1453, they sent a joint mission to the sultan. The good relationship between Vladislav and the court in Smederevo continued in the following period, which was evidenced by their extensive and ongoing communication regarding agreements and preparations for Vladislav's marriage to Anna Kantakouzene from 1453 to 1455.

Bosnian King Stjepan Tomaš tried to take advantage of Despot Đurađ's good relationship with the Ottoman court. According to the Ragusans' knowledge, during the spring of 1448, King Tomaš sent his own envoys for this purpose. In this case, the results of this mission, which was unsuccessful, are known. Among the reasons for the failure was the unfavorable attitudes of the Ragusan officials in the despot's service. The quality relationship between Despot Đurađ and Ottoman officials remained a lasting characteristic. During the summer of 1451, King Tomaš once again engaged in broader and more detailed correspondence with Đurađ for the same reasons. On this occasion, he handed over Srebrenik and managed to gain a stronger foothold with the Ottoman viziers through a joint mission sent to the Porte. The culmination of these negotiations and communication between the courts was the meeting of King Tomaš and Despot Đurađ during the autumn of 1452 in the eastern regions of the Bosnian state when,

according to some assumptions, the despot's ownership of the Zvonik was confirmed.

A few selected and presented examples demonstrate that the disappearance of source material in the territories of the medieval states of Bosnia and Serbia did not entirely prevent the basic representation of correspondence between Bosnian and Serbian courts. Based on the reflections on this communication, preserved through decisions and instructions of Ragusan authorities, it appears that these were relationships of moderate frequency and uneven quality, which were influenced by regional factors. Nevertheless, these observations show that there were also typical neighborly relationships among the political magnates of these states behind more significant political processes. Despite all efforts, sources of this kind do not sufficiently shed light on the life of the common people in border areas and their interaction with neighboring regions. In this and many other contexts, lost archives represent lost history.

SOURCES AND LITERATURE

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANUBiH	Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine
ANURS	Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Republike Srpske
AV	Arhivski vjesnik
BG	Braničevski glasnik
BIGZ	Beogradski izdavačko-grafički zavod
BF	Bosna Franciscana
BZK	Bošnjačka zajednica kulture
CCP	Croatica christiana periodica
GDI	Godišnjak Društva istoričara
GGB	Godišnjak grada Beograda
GID	Godišnjak Istorijskog društva
GNČ	Godišnjica Nikole Čupića
GPB	Građa o prošlosti Bosne
GZM	Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja
HAZU	Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti
HDZU	Hrvatsko društvo za znanost i umjetnost
HKD	Hrvatsko kulturno društvo
HT	Historijska traganja
HZ	Historijski zbornik
IG	Istorijski glasnik
IČ	Istorijski časopis
IZ	Istorijski zbornik
JAZU	Jugoslovenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti
JIČ	Jugoslovenski istorijski časopis
LMS	Letopis Matice srpske
MG	Mešovita građa
MZ	Mileševski zapisi
NV	Numizmatični vestnik
POF	Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju
PKJIF	Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor

SAN	Srpska akademija nauka
SANU	Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti
SKA	Srpska kraljevska akademija
SKZ	Srpska književna zadruga
SSA	Stari srpski arhiv
SUD	Srpsko učeno društvo
VIG	Vojnoistorijski glasnik
ZFFB	Zbornik radova Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu
ZIRAL	Zajednica izdanja "Ranjeni labud"
ZIBiH	Zbornik za istoriju Bosne i Hercegovine
ZIMS	Zbornik Istorijskog muzeja Srbije
ZMSI	Zbornik Matice srpske za istoriju
ZRVI	Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta
ZMSS	Zbornik Matice srpske za slavistiku

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- *Consilium Minus* (Cons. Minus)
- *Consilium Rogatorum* (Cons. Rog.)
- *Lettere di Levante* (Lett. di Lev.)
- *Diversa Cancellariae* (Div. Canc.)
- *Diversa Notariae* (Div. Not.)
- *Debita Notariae* (Deb. Not.)
- *Lamenta de foris* (Lam. de for.)

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